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***Email updates and news briefs about
Italian events, festivals, celebrations
and happenings in the Land of Enchantment***

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ITALIAN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE . . . NOW TRENDING



First, a look at some facts . . .

Italian - the language of music, art, architecture and fabulous cuisine - is the fourth most studied language in the world. Italy is considered the birthplace of Western Civilization and a cultural superpower that has influenced the world's culture in every possible way. Italy has more UNESCO World Heritage Sites than any other country. It's the fifth most popular destination for American tourists and the second most popular study-abroad destination for American students.

Now, it's easier than ever to get on-board with the trend through a dynamic new resource that makes it convenient and fun! **Italian Language & Culture Services** delivers something for anyone, anywhere, who wants to learn, practice or just get familiar with *la bella lingua* and the rich culture it represents.

Italian Language & Culture Services is staffed with experienced native Italian teachers passionate about preserving and promoting Italian language and culture. They provide Italian language instruction through individual and group classes in-person in Albuquerque, or online anywhere in New Mexico, the US, and the World, using Skype or Google Hangouts.

Either way, get ready for an adventure in learning!

ICLS's teaching methods are results-oriented, creative and engaging. You'll learn Italian through song, film, commercials and cartoons. **ICLS**'s offerings of interactive specialty workshops span all fluency levels, from beginner to advanced, and cover a variety of interest levels from that of the first-time Italy traveler to the long-time, robust Italophile. Individuals and small groups are encouraged to take an active role in customizing their own curriculum ("Create Your Own Class") to meet their specific goals or to match their particular learning styles. Does it get any better than that?

Also on the menu are certified, notarized translation services for birth certificates, citizenship and other legal documents. Go from Italian to English or from English to Italian.

Find it all at www.nmlanguages.com – tuition fees, course descriptions, current offerings, and even some fun, free, online tools for learning and practicing *la bella lingua*. AND the **Italian Language & Culture Services**' Facebook page, www.facebook.com/ItalianLanguageCulture, is another great destination to get your Italian RDA – your Recommended Daily Allowance of Italian language and culture. Time to get on board with the trend!

##

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NOT YOUR GRANDMA'S OPERA COMPANY



With its non-intimidating, welcoming style, Opera Southwest has been converting down-to-earth, everyday folks into serious opera fans since 1972.

There's nothing elitist about New Mexico's acclaimed Italian opera company. There's nothing stuffy about it. And there's nothing pretentious about its celebrated Artistic Director and Principal Conductor, Maestro Anthony Barrese, who is as comfortable captivating audiences with his spirited lectures as he is rolling a bocce ball with his Albuquerque Italian fans.

While we're making the case for *down-to-earth*, consider OSW's non-intimidating Journal Theatre venue at the National Hispanic Cultural Center. It's simple, elegant and intimate with flowing curves and state-of-the-art acoustics. There's not a bad seat in the house, nor one from which you can't easily glance up at the supertitles above the stage to read the English translation of what's being sung, so you'll always "know the score." Even the price is unassuming, with tickets starting at only \$15.

Recently, OSW officially announced its expanded 45th season. It's a blockbuster consisting of three premieres. So, if you've been procrastinating on sampling opera or just not sure you're "the opera type," this is the perfect time to sign up for a test drive.

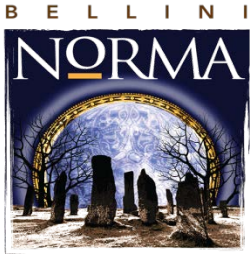


First up is the New Mexico premiere of *William Tell* (October 22, 25, 27, 29), the last of Gioacchino Rossini's operas and considered the crown jewel among this prolific composer's 40 works. You're more familiar with it than you may think, especially if you've ever watched a rerun of *The Lone Ranger* on the golden oldies channel, for which *Tell's* overture is the theme music. You may have also heard about the Swiss crossbow marksman who shot an apple off his son's head. That would be William Tell himself, proving his skill to the oppressive Austrian invaders. *William Tell* is a tale of inspiring heroism. It's the Swiss legend set to music – poignant, romantic and uplifting. If you're looking to get your operatic feet wet with a Rossini opera, Maestro Barrese is precisely the conductor to take you there. He's a passionate Rossini scholar and a fluent interpreter of the composer's brilliant scores.



Next up in Season 45 is *Bless Me Ultima* (February 18, 21, 23, 25). Yes, you heard right. The most famous New Mexico novel is now an opera. In fact, author Rudolfo Anaya assisted composer Hector Armienta with the libretto. You know the story of Tony's coming of age under the watchful guidance of the curandera, Ultima. You've read the book. You've seen the movie. Now New Mexico's favorite son, Guillermo Figueroa, conducts the opera version. This world premiere and historic event will sell out in a heartbeat. Don't waste a moment thinking twice about it!

NOT YOUR GRANDMA'S OPERA COMPANY



Finally there's the New Mexico premiere of Vincenzo Bellini's *Norma* (April 8, 11, 13, 15), the heartbreaking tale of a Druid Priestess trapped in a clandestine love affair with a Roman soldier. *Norma* is emblematic of the *bel canto* (beautiful singing) style of opera, and the part of Norma is considered one of the most vocally challenging pieces ever in operatic repertoire. If you're looking for adult entertainment - exotic, dramatic and powerful - *Norma* won't disappoint. And, you can count on Maestro Barrese to deliver with his signature energy and passion.

If you're looking to dig a little deeper into the story and the history of your chosen opera, OSW offers pre-opera seminars 45 minutes prior to the start of each performance. These talks are usually presented by the conductor and are designed to enhance your understanding and appreciation of the performance you're about to see. The talks are held in a small side theater right across the hall from the Journal Theatre. They're free, and go a long way toward enhancing the comfort zone of opera first-timers and frequent flyers alike.

So, what are you waiting for? Go to www.operasouthwest.org for more information, to buy tickets and to start your journey into the fascinating world of opera in the down-to-earth style of Opera Southwest!

##

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AND THE REST IS HISTORY



ALBUQUERQUE EXHIBITORS INC., proudly Announce

the GRAND OPENING of the Beautiful . . .

New HILAND Theatre
TONIGHT at 7:00 P.M.

2—Complete Shows
7:30 and 9:30 P. M.
Special souvenir tickets for
either performance on sale
now at the State or Hiland
Theatres.
You will be delighted with
the beauty and comfort of
this fine theatre.
Admission
All seats 50¢ incl. tax

INAUGURAL PERFORMANCE
... and Continuing
thru **SATURDAY**

MGM'S
TECHNICOLOR
MUSICAL SPREE!

Starring **JANE POWELL**
ANN **SOTHERN**
Nancy Goes to RIO
CARMEN MIRANDA
SCOTTY BICKETT
BARRY SULLIVAN
LOUIS CALHERN

and **STARTING SUNDAY**

More **laughs!**
WILLIAM HOLDEN
JOAN CAULFIELD
BILLY DE WOLFE
MONA FREEMAN
EDWARD ARNOLD
in **Dear Wife**

ALBUQUERQUE THEATRES

ALBUQUERQUE'S FINEST SUBURBAN THEATRE
HILAND SHOPPING CENTER • 4800 EAST CENTRAL

Opportunity knocked in a big way when Italian Festivals of New Mexico (IFNM) searched for a larger venue to celebrate the 10th anniversary of its popular annual flagship event, the NM Italian Film & Culture Festival. A fundraiser for disadvantaged kids, the multi-day festival was bursting at the seams of its traditional theater and event venues, and needed room to accommodate a growing audience. Enter NDI New Mexico with an offer to host the festival in its beautifully renovated Hiland Theater home. And dare we say . . . the rest is history. With NDI New Mexico, the festival found not only an ideal new location and a built-in beneficiary that shared its commitment to the well-being of children, but also the opportunity to bring back a bit of history to Route 66.

The Hiland opened its doors in 1950 and soon became a movie theater landmark along the Mother Road in Albuquerque. It screened its last film in the summer of 1995 and served as a live performance space for Musical Theater Southwest (MTS) until 2004 when MTS moved out and left the Hiland empty for the

next five years.

AND THE REST IS HISTORY

In 2009, the nonprofit NDI New Mexico signed a lease with Bernalillo County and set out to raise the dollars needed to renovate and refurbish the Hiland to use as its Albuquerque base for delivering programs to over 3,500 children locally and nearly 10,000 statewide annually. Their distinctive program uses dance and music to engage and motivate children, helping them develop discipline, a standard of excellence and belief in themselves that carries over into all aspects of their lives. Over the next few years NDI New Mexico took over the entire Hiland Theater block, transforming the old Walgreens and other former retail outlets into dance studios, offices, and a 600-seat performance space with a massive stage floor and state-of-the-art lighting and sound systems.



When IFNM and NDI New Mexico shook hands on their new partnership in the spring of 2016, restoration of the Hiland was complete except for two key elements essential for hosting a film festival— a big screen and projector. IFNM’s Board of Directors rejected rental in favor of a permanent gift to NDI New Mexico of a theater-size retractable screen and a theater-quality projector. “It just made sense from several points of view,” notes IFNM Treasurer, Carl Alongi. “Our gift brought the historic Hiland Theater back to its movie theater roots. It ensured that the Italian Festival films would be professionally projected for optimal audience enjoyment, and that the festival partnership between NDI New Mexico and IFNM could continue for years to come. It also enhanced NDI New Mexico’s revenue-generating options, putting NDI New Mexico in a position to rent the facility for other film festivals and community activities requiring quality projection capabilities.”

AND THE REST IS HISTORY

And a little more digging into the archives of Albuquerque's historic theaters also reveals a sliver of serendipity at play here. As it turns out, the Hiland, like all the Duke City's most celebrated theaters - the Sunshine, the El Rey, and the Kimo - was built by an Italian. It seems only fitting – some might even say *pre-destined* – that Frank Peloso's Hiland Theater would be restored to its motion picture origins with a little help from the state's most prominent Italian organization nearly 70 years later.

Including the screen and projector, IFNM's gift to NDI New Mexico from the 2017 NM Italian Film & Culture Festival totaled more than \$31,000.

A ceremonial check presentation will take place to a full house at the Hiland Theater on Friday, June 23, 2017 at 7:00 PM just before NDI New Mexico's Summer Dance Institute performance, *Fly Me to The Moon*, which features over 150 children learning about the elements of our universe through the joyful discipline of dance.

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Breathing new life into an old Italian favorite . . .

Albuquerque revitalizes the *Gruppo di conversazione italiana* with a new format and a great new home

Back in the mid-90s, if you wanted to develop an ear for the Italian language, practice your own conversation skills, or simply network with like-minded lovers of Italian culture, you showed up at the Double Rainbow coffee shop on Central Avenue in Albuquerque on Saturday mornings, ordered a *cappuccino* and headed for the section with the most animated discourse. The group consisted of native Italian speakers and Italian speakers-in-training. No one seems to know for sure when the group started, but most agree that its prime mover was Dr. Rachele Duke, UNM's *Professoressa* of Italian language and literature, who encouraged her students to take advantage of the opportunity to meet and practice the language with local native speakers.

The group was informal, with no particular name, format or participation requirements. You simply said, *buongiorno*, introduced yourself – and bada-bing, you were in. Those were the days before Facebook and Meetups and email announcements. You learned of the weekly gathering through *passaparola*.

Over the years, the Double Rainbow became Flying Star Café, the Italian group waxed and waned and waxed again, then began migrating to different coffee shops in search of a more user-friendly location – quieter, more convenient, more suitably configured for group interaction.

Through it all the group survived, even as most of the original members moved away, passed on, or simply stopped attending. But new faces continued to appear, and the demand for an Italian networking and conversation platform in Albuquerque remained strong.

Early this year an idea was born among a couple of members of the Italian Festivals of New Mexico (IFNM) board. Steve Paternoster, IFNM board member and self-described "*Capo di tutti i capi*" of Scalo Northern Italian Grill, has long envisioned his restaurant as the hub for Italian community activity. Without hesitation he offered Scalo's Cipriani Meeting Room as the home for regular get-togethers involving Italian culture and conversation. At the first meeting in February, the enthusiastic *Capo di tutti i capi* gave the group a warm welcome, a little history of his restaurant, and a summary of his own Italian heritage. Then, with traditional Italian hospitality, he began pouring wine and homemade *limoncello*, and ordering up specialties from the kitchen for all to sample and share.

Since then the group - now officially called The Albuquerque Italian Culture and Language Group - meets in the Cipriani Room at Scalo on the second and fourth Saturdays of the month. Ideal for its audio-visual capabilities, the room has already hosted several cultural presentations (some in Italian, some not)

including an enjoyable and informative *cantoitaliano* sing-along. There are plans to show films from time to time in the future. It's all in fulfillment of the group's mission: *To preserve, celebrate and advance the culture, language and heritage of Albuquerque's Italian community by providing a welcoming and supportive environment for Italians and lovers of Italian culture and language to network and share, speak the language, and form friendships.* With or without a presentation, there's always plenty of spirited Italian conversation among participants.



To learn what's planned for an upcoming meeting, Facebook users can join the Facebook Group (Albuquerque Italian Culture and Language Group) and non-Facebook folks can sign up for email notifications. (send your request to be on the email notification list to mariaberry97@gmail.com). True to its origins, the group charges no membership fees, retains its informal welcoming atmosphere and remains a "safe zone" for fledgling speakers to practice and listen. And it's not restricted to Duke City dwellers.

Some of the "regulars" live in Rio Rancho, Placitas and Tijeras. During the NM Italian Film & Culture Festival, a couple from Naples (that would be Italy, not Florida!) attended one of the sessions.

Overheard at a recent meeting: "This is a great way for us to stay in touch with our heritage and for all of us to enhance our passion for all things Italian."

##

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DIAMO IL BENVENUTO ALLA ALFA ROMEO



Thanks to *Fiat of Albuquerque*, New Mexico has enjoyed a taste of Italian culture of the automotive kind for several years now. The snappy, colorful Fiat has dotted our roadways since 2012, attracting car buyers with its winning combination of smart Italian design and outstanding fuel economy, and offering countless motorists the opportunity to *drive like an Italian*.

OF ALBUQUERQUE

FiatOfAlbuquerque.com



Now, with its Italian presence firmly established in the Land of Enchantment, Fiat has invited its automotive *paisano*, Alfa Romeo, to share its New Mexico residence at 5700 San Mateo Blvd NE in Albuquerque and to take the *drive-like-an-Italian* experience to a whole new level.

And what level is that? This, from encyclopedia.com, sums it up: *Alfa Romeos are not made for people who believe driving is boring and see cars only as a means of getting from A to B. They are built to transcend the essential and enter the realm of emotion. They embody aesthetic taste, a passion for sophisticated engineering, the pleasure of sitting*

OF ALBUQUERQUE

behind a driving wheel and the desire to express one's own personality. It's truly an Italian concept — an element of Italian culture and a part of the Italian DNA. Italians

love their supercars, not only for their speed and performance, but also for their aesthetics. They value how their Alfa supercar makes them *feel*.

That Alfa concept is not new to New Mexico. In fact, there has been an Alfa Owners Club (AOCNM) here since 1986 . . . and still going strong with regular monthly meetings, special events, tours and Alfa Romeo exhibitions; all aimed to encourage the preservation, ownership and operation of Alfa Romeo motorcars.

The automotive entrepreneur behind the bold and exciting move to bring Alfa Romeo to New Mexico is Pat Melloy. Pat's family has been in the car business here since 1955. On February 28, he'll officially introduce the legendary line of high-performance Alfa Romeos. The 4C Coupe and the 4C Spider have been turning heads at the Albuquerque dealership for many months. But now that several models of the long-awaited Alfa Romeo Giulia premium sports sedan have arrived from Milano, the Alfa motorcar family is complete, and ready for a special celebration.

It's true. Where the Alfa is concerned, the appeal is to a niche market of sports car enthusiasts who crave an exotic driving experience. The Coupe and the Spider range in price from \$55,000 to \$73,000. "These are cars that you take out for fun on a weekend and then put them back in the garage," Pat said in an interview last year.

But the Giulia may just go a step beyond that niche market. It's more of a family car, a sedan. And while it offers 280hp and a top speed of 149mph, it starts at a more affordable \$37,995.

Even if you're not in the market for an Alfa Romeo, a social visit to *Alfa Romeo of Albuquerque* is well worth your while to witness and celebrate a slice of Italian automotive history being made here in New Mexico. Meet *Italian Car Guy*, Pat Melloy, who is obviously having fun bringing a special share of Italian culture to New Mexico with the opportunity to *drive like an Italian*.

##

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Meet Pietro Guerrera (far left) and his passionate band of Italian foodies. They're the food lovers and food experts behind **Eattiamo**, a unique, authentic Italian cuisine concept that brings gourmet, 3-course Italian meals right to your table for a monthly dining experience like you could have only in the Old Country . . . until now.



We all know about the box lunch. Please welcome the box dinner – Italian style! Pietro is a man with a mission. It's a mission very much like ours at Italian Festivals of New Mexico (IFNM) – to promote and celebrate Italian culture. **Eattiamo's** focus is the cultural heritage of iconic Italian cuisine. "We have an exclusive network of more than 80 artisan producers," writes Pietro. "We select only the best products to bring authentic Italian taste to your table. We know our producers personally. We know their stories and the passion they put into creating their delicacies and following tradition."

When Pietro heard about the 2017 NM Italian Film & Culture Festival (March 21-26) through a former IFNM board member, he was quick to offer a hand in friendship and support. Festival goers will have the opportunity to win a 3 month/3 box **Eattiamo** subscription donated by **Eattiamo** as a raffle prize in one of the festival's fun and popular "Spaghetti Bowl Raffles."

But that's not all. In celebration of the festival's 10th anniversary, **Eattiamo** makes this exclusive festival offer to lovers of Italian food all over New Mexico:



\$138 (a \$390 value) and Free Shipping

claim your offer here: <https://us.eattiamo.com/special-free-gourmet-box/>

If you're doing the math, that's only \$46 a box. Each monthly box contains 6-8 authentic artisanal Italian delicacies ready to easily prepare a 3 course meal for up to 4 people. Each box also contains recipes and informational cards that tell you about each product. And don't be surprised if you find a personal note from Pietro tucked in your festival-special box recommending one of his own favorite Italian films. Talk about legendary Italian hospitality!

Eattiamo also has an online shop of single gourmet items AND a really good online magazine. See it all at www.eattiamo.com.

That's a wrap, Folks.....I'm feelin' the love and I'm on my way to place an order.

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THE GIRL CAN COOK!



Michelle Michelotti Martinez – multi-talented proud Italian and passionate food-blogger has been hiding in plain sight right here in New Mexico, giving cooking classes, catering, testing recipes and providing clients and friends with the most heavenly hand-made pasta this side of Paradise.

Her New Year’s resolution – spread the vision that food is an experience rooted in love. “Keep as close as you can from field to fork,” Michelle writes. “Know your growers and your purveyors; they are such cool people - a blast to talk to. It’s all about their love going into the raw product and your love going into the final dish.”

Love, after all, makes the world go ‘round. That vision, along with delectable recipes and her featured pasta of the week powers Michelle’s regular newsletter (request to subscribe at info@eatentions.com).

Michelle’s love affair with food began early, in her Nonna’s kitchen sampling freshly-made ricotta and watching Nonna’s specialty Ricotta Cavatelli magically come together for Sunday dinner. The experience inspired her own recipe for Sweet Potato-Ricotta Cavatelli with White Wine Braised Chicken Sauce (<http://www.eatentions.com/recipe/sweet-potato-ricotta-cavatelli-with-white-wine-braised-chicken-sauce/>). More importantly, it awakened Michelle’s inner pasta chef. Years later Michelle would open her own commercial pasta company. And now that handmade, heavenly pasta mentioned above is the jewel of her kitchen, made with the finest imported Italian Caputo flour, fresh organic eggs, and other local ingredients. She makes a dazzling array of shapes, sizes and flavors.

With such ample food knowledge and talent, which culinary institute did Michelle attend? “I’m a self-taught cook,” she says. “Although my awesome husband bought me this really cool trip to Italy for a 4-day culinary class where I learned a bunch, drank a lot, and ate even more. It was the best. So I guess I’m a self-taught cook with a 4-day degree in gluttony! Sweet.”

Michelle Michelotti Martinez lives in Albuquerque and works in both Albuquerque and Santa Fe. She’s a member of the board of Italian Festivals of New Mexico and an active member and friend to the Italian community. To learn more about Michelle, take a tour of her website www.eatentions.com. And keep her in mind when you get a hankerin’ for handmade to order pasta bordering on the sublime.

New Mexico is a treasure trove of talented, energetic Italians like Michelle, living and working here. We love telling you about them. Stand by for more news briefs highlighting the people who make Italy in New Mexico. Tell us about others in the treasure trove who ought to be celebrated!

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[back to the top...](#)