

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the first issue of the Basilicata Cultural Society of Canada!

The newsletter will, along with our Instagram and Facebook platforms and regular email correspondence, provide information about upcoming events, news about Lucani in Italy, Canada and around the world and feature stories about society activities.



FEATURE STORY



Pisticci – Toronto Cultural Exchange

The Basilicata Cultural Society of Canada welcomed five visitors from Pisticci in May as part of the Pisticci – Toronto Cultural Exchange sponsored by the Regione Basilicata.

Luca Torzella, Cecilia Capece, Chiara Borraccia, Mariangela Iannuzziello and Rocco Vena spent a week visiting sites in Toronto and area, including Centre Island, High Park, Kensington Market, the St. Lawrence Market, College Street and Martyr's Shrine in Midland. They also were interviewed by Filippo Gravina on his CHIN radio show and met with club members while enjoying meals prepared by Enzo.



The experience was deeply emotional and appreciated by the participants. As Luca told us, "I loved how, over the course of 24 hours, you were all able to make us feel like part of your community, living up to the reputation of the people of Basilicata as incredibly hospitable and welcoming. It's by no means a given, even if it may seem trivial." Chiara noted, "For me, this trip to Toronto was an extraordinary experience that I will cherish in my heart for the rest of my life. The hospitality you showed us and the bond that, in just a few days, formed both with the young people with whom I shared this adventure and with all of you who welcomed us like your own children and opened the doors of your homes to us, will remain an unforgettable memory." "It was deeply moving to see the care, nostalgia, and immense pride with which people cherish their roots. Every story shared carried the scent of home, and every smile brought with it the beauty of traditions preserved over time.

Sitting down to eat together wasn't just a simple lunch; opening the doors of your homes to us and sharing a part of your lives with us made us feel all the warmth and love as if we were at home. This sincere closeness made me realize that distance does not diminish a sense of belonging, but transforms it into a sweet melody: an invisible thread that unites hearts and recreates, even across the ocean, the timeless warmth of a true Italian family."

Rocco, too, remarked on the welcome to Toronto. "What struck me most of all was how, in such a short time, you managed to make us feel like part of your community. It's a quality often attributed to the people of Basilicata, but experiencing it firsthand, thousands of kilometers from home, was truly special."

Cecilia, too, felt at home in our city. "From the very first day, I felt at home, enveloped by a warmth I hadn't expected so many thousands of kilometers from Italy. You made me feel protected and valued, sharing with me not only your stories as

immigrants but also traditions, recipes, idioms, and expressions in dialect - a part of our language that sounds even warmer on foreign soil." Hearing dialect spoken so far away from home also was an emotional experience for Mariangela. "My visit to Toronto was a very meaningful experience, especially because it was a true intercultural exchange that allowed me to get to know the Italian-Canadian community better and understand the strong connection it maintains with its origins and roots."

One of the things that struck me most was the chance to speak Italian so far from Italy - but even more so, to hear our dialect. It was moving to discover how, despite the passing of the years and the distance, certain expressions, traditions, and ways of life are still cherished with such affection and pride."

Four representatives from the club will travel to Pisticci in July as part of the exchange and we look forward to their photos and impressions of their families' home town.



EVENTS

Italian Contemporary Film Festival

Thursday July 16, 7:00 p.m.

Join members of the society for Basilicata Night at the Italian Contemporary Film Festival at the Cineplex Cinemas in Vaughan on Thursday July 16 at 7:00 p.m. for a screening of *Le Cose Non Dette*. This drama is about the silences we carry through families and the long shadows of the words we cannot bring ourselves to speak.

For tickets, contact Nina Mazziotta at ninamazz@rogers.com or 416 520-7116.

Annual Member Picnic

Sunday July 19

Join us for a wonderful day of friends, food, music and fun at the Ciociaro Social Club, 7412 Kipling Avenue in Woodbridge. Gates open at 10:00 a.m. Bring your family, friends, and neighbors for a day of great food, music, laughter, and community spirit. Admission is free for all members, family and friends. Enjoy music, raffles, complimentary pasta and BBQ salsiccia, and finish off the day with delicious pizza, generously donated by Pizza Nova.

L'Eco dei Dialetti

Thursday, August 27, 2026

Columbus Centre, 901 Lawrence Avenue, Toronto

L'Eco dei Dialetti is an annual event dedicated to celebrating and preserving Italian dialects and regional languages.

Poetry, poems and songs will be presented in dialects from regions including Calabria, Abruzzo, Sicilia and Puglia. Adele Newton will represent the Basilicata dialect by reciting the nursery rhyme *Musce Muscil*.

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Basilicata artist honoured with 2026 Maria Callas Tribute Prize

Mariangela Zito, a mezzo-soprano from Basilicata, was a recipient of the 2026 Maria Callas Tribute Prize on March 7 in New York City. The Prize, now in its sixth year and conceived by prominent Italian television producer, Dante Mariti, is named after the legendary Greek-born, naturalized Italian soprano Maria Callas - universally known as "La Divina," a timeless symbol of talent, determination, and artistic greatness. Mariangela Zito is a mezzo-soprano originally from Scanzano Jonico and Pisticci whose voice elegantly expresses the emotional richness of the Italian lyrical tradition. She began her vocal studies at the Egidio Romualdo Duni Conservatory in Matera where she first earned a diploma in opera singing and later a master's degree in chamber music, both with highest honors. She continued her studies at the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome and at the Mascagni Academy of the Teatro Goldoni.

Seniors' Appreciation Lunch

We celebrated valued senior members of the Basilicata Cultural Society of Canada with our annual Seniors' Lunch on Sunday May 3. Enzo and his team presented a delicious spring meal featuring pasta and lamb chops and we were entertained by DJ Domenic's music.



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Italian Studies Professor Appointed as Metropolitan Toronto University President

Dr. Roberta Iannacito-Provenzano, a widely respected scholar, educator and leader, has been appointed Toronto Metropolitan University's 10th president and vice-chancellor – the first woman to hold the role. Currently serving at TMU as Provost and Vice-President, Academic, Iannacito-Provenzano will begin her five-year term as president in January 2027.

Dr. Iannacito-Provenzano holds a PhD in Italian Studies from the University of Toronto. Her professional expertise and personal passion focus heavily on Italian culture, history, and linguistic roots and her research explores how Italian ethnicity, identity, language, and food are represented and branded on social media and in the modern world. In addition to her academic work, Dr. Iannacito-Provenzano was honoured with the Premio Ambassador award, symbolized by un passaporto d'oro (a golden passport), for her contributions to the promotion of Molise.

Ladies' Bus Trip

The annual Ladies Bus Trip this year took the group to the Niagara Region on Saturday June 20 and was a great success. Many thanks to Aida Pine Valley Bakery, Pizza Nova and everyone that helped with donations!



RECIPES FROM OUR ROOTS



**NSALATA DI ARANCE, FINOCCHI E
NOCI/ORANGE, FENNEL AND WALNUT
SALAD
A REFRESHING SALAD RECIPE, ADAPTED
FROM IL RICETTARIO DELLA PACCHIANA**

Ingredients

- 2 large oranges
- 1 fennel bulb
- 6 – 8 shelled walnuts
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

METHOD

1. Carefully peel the oranges, making sure that the outer skin and white pith are completely removed.
2. Slice the oranges thinly or cut into wedges.
3. Clean the fennel bulb, removing the tough outer layers and slice very thinly using a sharp knife or mandolin.
4. Coarsely chop the walnuts.
5. Add oranges, fennel and walnuts in a large bowl, add salt and pepper to taste and drizzle with the olive oil.
6. Gently mix, making sure the dressing coats all of the ingredients.

Serve immediately and enjoy the fresh and lively scent of citrus!

Serves 4. Buon appetito!