

DID ITALY STEAL DISHES FROM PAKISTAN?

I am Italian.

I bet the first thing that popped up in your mind is food, like pizza or pasta. Well, since I am in Poland, I got to experience different cultures, thanks to the variety of ethnicities that my volunteer group is composed of. One guy of the group is Ans, from Pakistan, he was a little shy at the beginning but he soon started to open up, he is a really funny person and most of all, he is an AMAZING cook. He often cooks for all of us and I quickly started to notice a similarity between Pakistani cuisine and Italian cuisine.

Specifically one plate he prepared, made me want to look more into the Pakistani cuisine, this dish is called Chapati.

Chapati is a very simple plate, made of whole-wheat flour, water, salt and a little bit of oil, it is actually an Indian food, but it soon spread in neighboring countries, like Pakistan.

Chapati looks like this:



I couldn't help but notice the resemblance with the more known to me, Piadina Romagnola, made from wheat flour, water, lard(or olive oil), bicarbonate(or yeast) and salt. Piadina Romagnola(or Piada, for friends) is native of a region in northern Italy called Emilia Romagna. Let me introduce you to Piada:



Although the recipe and the aspect of the two recipes are pretty similar, the use we make of the two preparations are pretty different. Chapati, in Pakistan, is pretty much always eaten with chicken curry, and it is eaten at any time of the day, breakfast, lunch or dinner.

Piadina Romagnola, on the other hand, is mostly eaten with ham, cheese and some kind of sauce, often mayonnaise; it is really hard to see Italians eat Piadina in the morning, unless they have been up all night partying, then yes, in that case, you will easily see them eating Piadina at 7am, you can decide whether you want to consider it as a breakfast or something else! ;)

Another plate that is pretty similar both for Pakistan and Italy is, respectively, Kofta for Pakistan and Polpette for Italy.

The word Kofta comes from Hindi and Urdu kofta, which it is translated in “poundedmeat”. Kofta are almost always made of grinded spiced lamb meat and onion and they are usually eaten fried. Here is a picture of them:



The dough of Italian Polpette is usually made of meat too (but you can even find it made with fish or vegetables), aromas and spices kneaded in egg yolk; once you have the dough, you separate it in round little pieces and you cover them in flour and breadcrumbs, you can then cook your Italian Polpette in the oven or fry them in oil. This is how Italian Polpette look like, pretty similar to Kofta, aren't they?



I personally never tried Kofta and I probably never will, because I recently started to adopt a vegan lifestyle in my life, but I have to tell you, I LOVED Chapati, it is really true that most of the times, the simpler things... are the best things; and food, it is not excluded.

I will forever cherish the amazing dishes that Ans is cooking for us during this project and I hope that before this project ends... he will prepare some more amazing Chapati for us! :b