

## **Amo la Sardegna Vol. 1**

My name is Toshinobu Kikui, a service staff-member at Tharros, and it's my honor to be the first to share some of Sardinia in this new series!

As you may well know, there's no shortage of Italian restaurants in Tokyo. But, there is likely no other restaurant as dedicated to creating a Sardinian atmosphere as Tharros. And I have to admit, I knew very little about Sardinia before finding it. However, I gradually found myself attracted to Sardinia's culinary culture, back when I was still a customer - I was able to discover the Italian food unique to Sardinia.

Now that I'm working at Tharros, I'd like to recommend the "bottarga," a Sardinian delicacy of salted and cured mullet roe. I'm hooked on its unique taste and flavor. Dishes such as, "Bottarga, Celery and Pecorino Cheese Salad" or "Spaghetti with Bottarga" are great opportunities to enjoy this taste.

To go with these bottarga themed dishes, I recommend trying Vernaccia di Oristano, a white wine from the island.

I look forward to serving these to you at Tharros!

## **Amo la Sardegna Vol. 2**

My name is Tomohiro Ohki, and I'm a service staff-member at Tharros. I've been working for the restaurant since 2008, a year after the restaurant opened its doors. Though I left the restaurant at one time, I'm now back!

I still remember the day I first saw the Sardinian flag outside Tharros. I was so intrigued by it that I went home to learn more about the restaurant and Sardinia - I even applied for a job there that same day!

Since joining Tharros, I've visited the very island itself - a much loved resort among Europeans. Though it's a relatively small island, the Kingdom of Sardinia played a significant role in the unification of Italy.

When it comes to Sardinian food, I suggest trying pane carasau, a thin, crisp traditional flatbread. This bread is utilized for pane guttiau, an oven baked dish using olive oil, salt and herbs. It's a simple but ideal side dish for a variety of Sardinian cuisine.

For those passionate about Italy and its culture, Sardinia really is a must-experience destination. And Tharros in Shibuya is the only place in Japan

where you can truly experience its culinary culture.

On a personal note, I feel fortunate to have worked here for four years. Though I leave after this month, I leave with a wealth of fond memories to take with me on future journeys.

### **Amo la Sardegna Vol. 3**

Hello! My name is Saki Jouho, a service staff member at Tharros, and also a wine lover.

I started working at Tharros three years ago, and it's actually the first restaurant I've ever worked for. At the time I started, I had no idea about Sardinia. I remember Baba-San, the owner-chef, wondering if I was happy working for a Sardinian restaurant instead of somewhere more mainstream Italian.

But what I enjoy about working at Tharros, and what makes me happy, is that I come across many Sardinian wines difficult to find in other restaurants, and even difficult for locals to source. I love Tharros and Sardinia.

My recommendation at our restaurant is a digestif called Mirto. Mirto is a popular liqueur on the island for its sweet, herbal flavor. It's made with the myrtle plant, which is grown freely in Sardinia.

At Tharros, this liqueur is used in sauce for a horse meat dish, or poured over ice cream to serve an affogato.

I'm sure that once you try it, you'll be hooked!

### **Amo la Sardegna Vol. 4**

Hello! My name is Keiko Kondo. It has been three years since I joined Tharros as a kitchen staff. These days I am in charge of desserts.

At Tharros I make a variety of Sardinian desserts. Among them, I heartily recommend seadas, a Sardinian honey and cheese pastry, and arguably the oldest dessert in Europe. Many Sardinian people in Tokyo visit Tharros specifically for it.

This time of year, Italians celebrate Easter, which they call Pasqua. It is, of course, a celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. To me, it signifies the arrival of spring, a season for which I anxiously await every winter.

To celebrate Pasqua, Sardinians traditionally eat sweets called pardulas: these are delicious, delicate little pies stuffed with a filling of ricotta cheese. Along with this, it's common for people to bake semolina bread called su coccoi de Pasca, with an egg wrapped inside. It comes in many different shapes, such as birds and flowers. Sardinian people use this bread for decoration. And naturally, you can see su coccoi de Pasca at Tharros.

I like Sardinian sweets because even though they are simple in nature, this also makes them idyllically warm. The Sardinians make their desserts with local ingredients, from recipes handed down from their ancestors. They are often very cute. These desserts really are very important cultural asset of Sardinia. I am very proud to make them day in and day out at Tharros.

### **Amo la Sardegna Vol. 5**

Ciao! My name is Koji Ito, and I'm the chef at Tharros in Shibuya.

I first heard about Sardinia when I was working for a restaurant in the commune of Riccione, in Emilia-Romagna of Northern Italy. Every day, I worked long hours and went to bed really late. Fortunately for me, there were several pizzerias that were open until late. One of these pizzerias, which I visited often, was home to a service staff member from Sardinia.

He was a nice guy, but very quiet. I used to order exactly the same pizza and beer, every time, and he served them without too much speaking. Over time, we started to understand each other. He was introverted, but kind. Though I was taken care of by many Italians on my three year culinary stint in the country, somehow that man from Sardinia is one of a few I still remember,

Sardinia has its own culture, unique and different from main land Italy. I'm very happy to promote its culture to those who come to Tharros through the dishes I prepare.

### **Amo la Sardegna Vol.6**

My name is Takahiro Akutsu. I'm a member of the kitchen staff at Tharros, and I'm in charge of pasta dishes.

Working everyday at Tharros, I get the chance to learn new things about Sardinian food daily. I still remember the very first thing I ate here - boiled tuna. It was so soft; it totally changed the image I had of cooked tuna.

Even here in Tokyo, there are Sardinians. Some have organized a group called ISOLA, which aims to promote and enhance understanding of Sardinian culture in Japan, including but not limited to, its food. ISOLA is a very passionate about its heritage, especially because they are so far from home.

ISOLA organizes workshops for us to experience and understand their culture. Some of us have been to the island already, but others are planning their very first visit.

All of us working at Tharros are equally passionate and committed to the promotion of Sardinian culture, and we do this through the amazing food and wine.

### **Amo la Sardegna Vol.7**

Hello! My name is Fumiko Ohata. I'm a service staff member at Tharros.

It has been about a year since I started working at Tharros, but even before that I was a frequent customer. There's something about the atmosphere and the people working here that I've always really liked. I still remember how happy I felt after finishing a meal at Tharros. It feels a little strange to be on the other side now, trying to make people happy, but I really enjoy recommending dishes I enjoyed to our customers!

Sardinia is often call an island of shepherds, because the island has more sheep than men. So naturally, I like dishes with lamb. And my favorite lamb dish is oven grilled bone in lamb. Any meat lovers are sure to love this one!

Another dish I'd like to recommend is pane carasau, a preserved food for shepherds. It is thin and crisp, and usually in the form of a dish 30 cm wide. At Tharros, it is flavored with rosemary or pecorino cheese.

Being an island, just like our own country, Sardinia's food culture is similar to Japan.

I look forward to sharing my enthusiasm with you at Tharros.

### **Amo la Sardegna Vol.8**

My name is Yu Nagano. I'm a member of the kitchen staff at Tharros, in Shibuya.

I really enjoy working here. I like the atmosphere.

Tharros is very versatile. Many customers get together to enjoy food and conversation at a table, while others like to take a counter seat to watch us cooking in the kitchen. Others still sometimes use Tharros for a cup of coffee while waiting for friends. That's why we attract many people, who in turn make the atmosphere special

If you decide to eat at the counter, I encourage you to speak to the service and kitchen staff. We're always happy to make recommendations and answer questions.

As I happen to be in charge of main dishes, I heartily recommend dishes with whole fish. We can oven grill them with herbs, or coat them with rock salts. And of course, we'll help you divide the fish between diners at the table. In summer, the Italian fish soup called zuppa di pesce is a very good dish.

Tharros is a restaurant you can enjoy in all seasons, and especially in summer. Please come and enjoy the atmosphere.

## **Amo la Sardegna Vol.9**

Hi! I'm Rikiya Sato. I started working for Tharros in June.

I have to admit, I didn't know anything about Sardinia until I started at Tharros. I decided to work here because of a simple love for Italian food. Now, however, I'm totally infatuated with Sardinia's culinary culture. I'd love to someday go there to learn more about the island's cheese and wine.

At Tharros, as a service staff member, I enjoy communicating with customers. And because I used to be a patissier before Tharros, I also know desserts, and heartily recommend our cheese cake. It's made with pecorino, a cheese from Sardinia.

I'm very proud of the good food we serve our customers. I'm also proud to have such good colleagues around me. We are all passionate about Sardinia, and hungry to learn more about the island every day. I hope you'll enjoy our food and service!

And don't hesitate to let us know if you need anything or have any questions!

## **Amo la Sardegna Vol.10**

Hello! My name is Takuya Matsumoto. I work in the kitchen of Tharros, where I started working in July. I have always been interested in Italy's regional cuisine, and I'm especially intrigued by Sardinia's. It seems very unique. In fact, that's the reason I'm here.

Currently, I'm in charge of desserts and breads. We make a variety of desserts everyday, but the quintessential Sardinian dessert is *seadas*. It's a simple and rustic crispy fried pastry with fresh pecorino cheese, upon which you pour honey.

I work inside the counter, and enjoy speaking with customers as I cook. I enjoy watching movies, and I used to play baseball and karate - I'm happy to talk about these topics, too!

Don't hesitate to ask if you need a dessert recommendation.

I hope you will enjoy our food, our wine, and our atmosphere.

## **Amo la Sardegna Vol.11**

Hello! I'm Yuta Fujimori, and I recently joined the Tharros team in July! Since starting, I've been in charge of appetizers.

I've always been interested in Southern Italian cuisine, and even traveled to Italy as a student. Since starting here, I've been learning more about Southern Italy, and especially Sardinia. I'm especially intrigued by the fact that the island has traditionally been a crossroad for a variety of different cultures.

We have a lot of Sardinian decorations around our restaurant. Among them is a female face mask placed on the kitchen counter, where I work. I found out it is for a festival called *Sartiglia*, which is held annually in Oristano in February. Wearing this mask and traditional costume, horsemen ride through the city brandishing swords. It is a sacred fertility rite.

The more I learn about Sardinia, the more I find myself interested in its culture and tradition, as well as the food and wine! I definitely plan to one day go, see, and attend the exciting festivals on the island.

## **Amo la Sardegna Vol.12**

Ciao! My name is Manuel Bianchi. I am twenty seven years old, and from Vercelli in Piedmont. I've been in Japan for a year, and work as a member of the service staff at Tharros. Being from Piedmont, I never thought I would work at a Sardinian restaurant. Though I have been there once before, I'd love to someday go back to see the ancient city of Tharros and its flamingos!

Did you know the island is famous for the longevity of its people? It's true; one out of every 4,000 people is more than 100 years old. That's 2.5 times higher than the world's average! It's been said it's the life style that helps them to live longer. Every day they eat well-balanced food and enjoy a couple of glasses of wines. And of course, they talk and laugh with their friends and families.

Let's live long lives by eating, drinking and laughing like Sardinians!

Buon appetito !