

Through the Power of Words
October 2024 Terri Maue Newsletter



The Italy Edition



Ciao, Amici!

I am back from two weeks in Italy, and I have this to say: Travel is stressful; international travel is exhausting! I wouldn't recommend it, except for all the great experiences that come along with it.

I returned determined to get Zee and Rico to Italy somehow. Maybe they could . . . well, I don't want to spoil the surprise if I can pull it off. Meanwhile, here's where my brain was at times during the trip.

The Inside Scoop: And There Lay the Body

My writer friends encouraged me to look for good places to find a body in book three. Italy is full of glorious monuments, awe-inspiring churches, tiny alleyways, grand piazzas, sidewalk cafes, olive groves, vineyards; there is no shortage of interesting places in which a body could turn up and create lots of questions.

Perhaps at the feet of the goddess of the harvest at Florence's world-famous Uffizi Museum.



Or under this vine-draped gazebo where we guests at an Umbrian farmhouse gathered in the morning to drink our espresso.



Or maybe in the kitchen of this castle where we tried our hand at making gnocci, a traditional Italian dumpling made with potatoes. That's me in the lower right. Interesting fact, the potatoes must be old. They actually sell 'old potatoes' specifically for this purpose. Hmm, poisonous gnocci.



I'd have to be careful maligning Italian food, though. "Mama" (standing to the right of the table) presented us with a fantastic, four-hour, multi-course brunch the Sunday after I arrived. And she clearly rules the roost in this place.



We even got to watch her make the desert dough right before our eyes, before whisking it away to the kitchen to fill and bake. Here's the result, a flaky pastry filled with fruit and dusted with sugar. Melt in your mouth.



Ah-h, the pastry . . .

The Great Pastry Hunt: *Dolci*

I'll admit, I didn't always remember to take photos! But here's a sampling of the gastronomical delights I savored.

Mini croissants filled with pistachio cream. Pistachio is a favorite filling. I think every bakery offered some version of these.



A cookie rollup filled with plum jam. Plum jam!



An assortment, including an apricot square (or it might have been marmalade), a plum cannoli, a chocolate cannoli, and two sugar-studded almond cookies.



This was breakfast one morning: from upper right just below the coffee cup: a chunk of cheese, a wine-jam-infused cookie, a dark chocolate biscotti, and an excellent sweet fig pocket.



Um, if anyone would like me to visit another country to sample the baked goods, please send your suggestion to terri@terrimaue.com Or if you have an idea for a local bakery, please send that. Research never ends!

One last thought:

Zee likes to drive her Mini Cooper, sometimes a bit recklessly. She has NOTHING on Italian drivers. Who needs lanes? If there's half a space, put your car into it. Drive wherever you see room to move, as long as you're going in the direction you want. And the motorcycles—they cut in front, across, wherever there's a few inches of space. All on roads so narrow and crooked it seems there's barely room for one car, much less three or four and a darting mishmash of motorcycles. And pedestrians; let's not forget them. People in Italy either have a death wish or believe they are indestructible. They walk like they drive. It's all crazy. But Zee might love it.

And now to business:

Where to Find Me

Mark your calendars for some holiday shopping. Nothing says *Buon Natale* like a nice murder! (And an Italian pastry. I really need to find a store that ships.)

Saturday November 16, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.: Summerlin Book Festival, Las Vegas, Mountainview Presbyterian Church, 8601 Del Webb Blvd. This is a multi-author

event, featuring over 100 book titles in multiple genres. Free admission. There will be raffles and genre and writer discussions.

Friday December 6, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.: The Coffee Class, Henderson NV (Coffee House Tours), 709 E. Horizon Drive Suite 100.

Hope to see you at one of these!

Coming April 3-5, 2025:

The Las Vegas Writers Conference!



I'm so excited that the conference will be in-person this year. The Henderson Writers Group sponsors this conference, and organizers have assembled a great line-up of presenters, panelists, editors and agents. Early bird registration is open until November 30, and can save you \$150.

Make a plan to attend. I'll be there. Hope to see you! Here's the website:

<https://lasvegaswritersconference.com/>

That's all for this month. I hope you didn't mind the switched-up format.

I leave you with my favorite picture from the whole trip. Rome is full of fabulous sites, awesome statuary, inspiring ruins, the indescribable Vatican museums. But this is the picture I will print and hang on my wall with all the photos of those who are precious to me.



Thanks for reading!

Arrivederci. Ci vediamo a novembre!