



SPRING 2024

CORTI BROTHERS

COLOMBA FOR SPRINGTIME

Just as panettone means Christmas for Italians, the **COLOMBA** means Easter. This is a baked cake, in a rather odd shape—that of a flying dove. It is made with a mother sponge, raised dough to which butter, eggs, and candied citrus fruit is added, and the top decorated with either whole Sicilian almonds or a hazelnut cream made with Piemonte hazelnuts. Beside being the festive cake for Easter, it has myriad uses after as a base for fresh fruit desserts, where the Colomba acts as the base for almost every kind of sliced and sugared fruit teamed with whipped cream or whipped cream blended with Mascarpone cheese, a bit of sugar and some vanilla. Or, used as a base for “bread” pudding, sublime!

This year we have **COLOMBA** from Dario LOISON, and a very special one made with the fragrant red variety from Piemonte, **BRACHETTO d’ACQUI** from **COCCHI**.

COLOMBA AL BRACHETTO d’ACQUI COCCHI

Just as we offered the **COCCHI PANETTONE** with **VERMOUTH** at Christmas, for Easter we are offering a Colomba made with the red, very fragrant Piemontese variety, **BRACHETTO**, and the **COCCHI** wine to go with this Colomba. It is baked by Albertengo in Cuneo, and the wine is made by Cocchi. The fruit used in the cake is macerated in the wine and then both added to the dough.

For those of you who have never tried Brachetto, here is your opportunity to taste a wine made from the most expensive grapes in Piemonte.

COLOMBA AL BRACHETTO d’ACQUI COCCHI. Kilo size, wrapped \$31.99 (#5900)

BRACHETTO d’ACQUI COCCHI SPUMANTE

BRACHETTO d’ACQUI is an “amabile” red wine made from grapes of the same variety. This is a very old variety in Piemonte, almost lost because it fell out of style. It is grown only a limited area in Piemonte in the area of **ACQUI TERME** and most always made as a frothy light red wine with the most fragrant of rose-like scents and light sweetness. Brachetto now is one of, if not the most expensive grape variety grown in Italy. The fresh fruit sells for more money than nebbiolo grapes for making Barolo. The grapes are bought by the kilo.

Brachetto is a variety that was very much sought after during the 18th and early 19th centuries, and with the rise of other varieties, and changing wine styles, it was relegated to a minor role in the area of the Monferrato and Alessandria. **Acqui Terme** is a very old “spa” town with famous water and its Brachetto. Brachetto is now back in vogue and rightly so. Normally, vinified like a moscato, it needs to be left fragrantly sweet and with a gentle mousse in the mouth. Its distinct rose-like scent makes it a splendid accompaniment to dessert or as a morning or afternoon bottle of wine that is surprisingly delicious and “more-ish.” It sings “Springtime” full force!

COCCHI BRACHETTO d’ACQUI SPUMANTE 7% 750ml \$24.49 +CRV (#5901) \$264.00 cs/12

From LOISON: COLOMBA

- CLASSICA:** with candied Sicilian orange peel and almonds on top, unfilled, wrapped \$32.99 (#5902)
SENZA CANDITI: without candied fruit, just almonds and sugar topping, wrapped \$32.99 (#5903)
LIMONE: with a lemon cream filling, wrapped \$36.99 (#5904)
ALLO ZABAIONE: with zabaione (sabayon) cream filling wrapped \$37.99 (#5905)
A.D. 1552: with Sicilian orange peel, almonds, boxed, 750g boxed \$34.99 (#5906)
PESCA e NOCCIOLE: with candied peach bits and hazelnut topping, boxed \$39.79 (#5907)
AL MANDARINO DI CIACULLI: with Palermo's mandarino peel, boxed \$35.99 (#5908)
REGAL CIOCCOLATO: monocru South American chocolate, chocolate cream, boxed, \$39.99 (#5909)
CAMOMILLA e LIMONE: Roman chamomile flower, Sorrento lemon peel, boxed \$35.19 (#5910)
CLASSICA MAGNUM: cellophane wrapped, ribbon, 2 Kilo \$71.89 (#5912) 5 Kilo \$143.99 (#5913)

LOISON VENEZIANA

- ALL' ALPIANE:** with raisins plumped with Vignalta's passito Alpiane, wrapped, kilo \$32.99 (#5915)
AL MANDARINO DI CIACULLI: with Palermo's mandarino, boxed, 550g \$29.99 (#5916)
AL PISTACCHIO DI BRONTE: with Bronte pistachio cream filling, boxed, 550g \$35.99 (#5917)

LOISON PANFRUTTO FILONE:

We have again added this year that specialty from Loison bakery that was created in 1930s by Dario Loison's grandfather: it is a type of **FILONE**, an elongated, baguette shaped loaf with candied fruit and raisins that is similar to, but not the same dough, as panettone. It is a tender, leavened cake with candied fruit and raisins glazed with a hazelnut glaze. It can be sliced and enjoyed or sliced and toasted. Either way, it is delicious and shows what deliciousness can come from thinking outside of the box. Three versions, boxed, 500g

- LIMONE** (Amalfi lemon peel, raisins and IGP Piemonte hazelnut glaze) \$19.99 (#5918)
CIACULLI MANDARINO (Ciaculli mandarine and raisins, IGP hazelnut glaze) \$19.99 (#5919)
CIOCCOLATO (Dark chocolate drops, IGP hazelnut glaze) \$19.99 (#5920)

A RETURN OF THE PANETTONE FROM LOISON:

Even Italians see the virtue of having it throughout the year! (Just to see if there is a demand.)

- PANETTONE AL LIMONE** with lemon cream, boxed, 600g \$21.99 (#5921)

LINGHAM'S SAUCES SINCE 1908

Lingham's chilli sauce was born in Penang, Malaysia in 1908. From that time it has changed hands only three times, the last time in 2011 into the hands of the Yeoh family. It is found pretty much around the world. Depending on the flavor, it is made with only four ingredients--cane sugar, red chillies, salt, and vinegar--and no preservatives or stabilizers of any sort. More than one hundred years old, the ingredients for Lingham's recipe have not changed--making it one of the original "natural" food condiments.

I happen to like Lingham's very much. Unfortunately, it has been a bit difficult to find these last few years. But Corti Brothers now has a good supply, and I am pleased to offer it again to our customers. There are many, perhaps too many, chilli sauces on the market, but none compare with Lingham's. It's unusually good and its balanced hot and sweet flavor combines very well with the two added ingredients of ginger and garlic that flavor two of the Lingham sauces.

The **Original Chilli** Sauce, called **Hot Sauce** for our market's label, is delicious with its mouth filling warmth and balanced sweetness which allows food flavors to play with spiciness. There are four types which Corti Brothers offers of Lingham's: **Original Chilli Hot Sauce**; the **Extra Hot**, (which is really not that hot); and then the **Garlic** and the **Ginger** versions with their dominant flavor from fresh garlic and ginger. There is one thing one must do with Lingham's: You must shake it from side to side to mix it before using. I store mine, once opened, in the refrigerator for best quality. If you have not tried Lingham's before, I suggest you try it now. You'll probably not be without it again. I cannot imagine corned beef hash without it!

LINGHAM'S SAUCES 12.6 oz bottle \$6.99 each

ORIGINAL HOT (#5922) **EXTRA HOT** (#5923) **GARLIC** (#5924) **GINGER** (#5925)

CORTI BROTHERS SELECTION OF CALIFORNIA Extra Virgin Olive oils FROM 2023 HARVEST

CORTI BROTHERS EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL: Pablo's Oil. Milled by Pablo Voitzuk.

TAGGIASCA: From an orchard in Woodland, CA, milled in a Mori-Tem mill. Greenish yellow color, soft fragranciness of ripe olives, some pungency. **Silver medal**, 2024 LA Competition 500 ml \$23.99 (#5926)

CORATINA: The same orchard and milling as above. Green color, very green flavor, pungent, with pleasant bitterness. **Gold medal**, 2024 LA Competition 500 ml \$23.99 (#5927)

CORTI BROTHERS SELECTION FROM THE OLIVE TRUCK PRODUCTION.

FRANTOIO: From Vernales, CA, October harvest. Deep green color, not oily, drying in mouth, balanced pungency and bitterness. **Gold medal**, Robust, 2024 LA Competition 500 ml \$27.99 (#5928)

PICUAL: From Capay, CA, November harvest. Very green color, intense, balanced, long flavor, balanced bitterness and pungency. **Silver medal**, 2024 LA Competition 500 ml \$27.99 (#5929)

ASCOLANO: From a Woodland, CA orchard, November harvest. A delicate oil, light green color, very fragrant soft flavor; pungent, with low bitterness. Not entered in LA Competition 500 ml \$27.99 (#5930)

CORATINA: from a Granite Bay, Placer County, CA orchard. November harvest. Winner of **Gold Medal**, **Best of Class**, and **the Mugelli Prize** at the Los Angeles International Olive Oil competition, February 2024. 500ml \$27.99 (#5931)

UCHIBORI VINEGARS: SPLENDID VINEGARS FROM JAPAN

On my last trip to Japan to attend FoodEx in Tokyo, I found a really superb producer of vinegar made in Gifu Prefecture in the mountains in the middle of Japan. This producer is UCHIBORI, who has been making vinegars since 1877. One normally doesn't think much about vinegar, it is just there. Such was the state of things until the arrival of Traditional Aceto Balsamico, which radically changed consumers' view of vinegar. I hope that **UCHIBORI** will do the same for somewhat more traditional vinegars.

In order to make fine vinegar, which is not a by-product or lesser product, but a product which needs a finely made base in order to make fine vinegar. Uchibori does just that. While producing vinegars from rice mainly, Uchibori make the substrate which they convert to vinegar. In most vinegar production, a substrate is purchased from various and different producers and converted to vinegar. Uchibori makes its sake substrate and then converts this same sake to vinegar. The case in point is its DAIGINJO VINEGAR. At Daiginjo level, rice is milled to 50% or less of its original size. It then is produced mainly in the winter during cold weather.

A sake lover knows the word **DAIGINJO** in sake as meaning the highest quality level of sake produced. Uchibori makes its own daiginjo sake just to convert it to vinegar. All Japanese vinegar is made from some part of koji fermented rice, produced as sake and then converted to vinegar. Uchibori DAIGINJO vinegar is the only one of its type that I know of, where the highest quality sake is produced just to make vinegar.

Tasting it at the Uchibori stand at FoodEx in Tokyo, I was amazed at its clean, fragrant and then tasty character, putting it very much out of the normal realm of Japanese white vinegar. It was an astonishing flavor and delicious. Mellow, soft, with rich rice sweetness, but not "sweet" tasting, Daiginjo vinegar is splendid white vinegar for use with wine. Normally wine and vinegar are not served in tandem

Another tasting led me to the Uchibori Black vinegar, **RINGOYAMA KUROSU**. (It really is not "black", more like a very dark chocolate brown color), with again, an astonishingly delicious flavor profile. Do not let the name bother you. The vinegar takes its name from Mt. Rinko in Gifu prefecture. It is not particularly thick, but very flavorful, with a terrific umami background flavor that is both mellow and balanced. Production of this vinegar uses twice as much brown rice than required by the official definition of Black Vinegar. Currently, I am really enjoying as an aperitif a small amount of this vinegar in a glass, topped up with San Pellegrino water. (The recipe: one part vinegar and four parts water.) Simply astonishingly good! I have also started using Uchibori Black vinegar in braises and sautéés to point up flavors. It works wonderfully and recently has been promoted by several starred French chefs specifically to point up flavor in dishes. There is nothing similar in Western cooking.

Both the Uchibori Daiginjo and Uchibori Black Vinegar merit your attention. They probably will change your mind about vinegar. For what they are, they are perfect. Spring and summer are coming. Salads need vinegar!

UCHIBORI DAIGINJO VINEGAR 360ml bottle \$9.99 (#5932) \$53.00 case/6 (#5932C)

UCHIBORI RINGOYAMA KUROSU 360ml bottle \$7.99 (#5933) \$43.00 case/6 (#5933C)

TERMS OF SALE: This list supersedes all others. All taxable items, such as wine, beer, spirits, books will be taxed at the rate of 8.75%. All California State required bottles and cans will incur the California Redemption Value (CRV) charge for recycling per bottle at 05¢ for under 24 oz and 10¢ for 24 oz and over. This is for all sales since we sell in California. Foodstuffs are not taxable. Shipping will be charged at prevailing rates. PLEASE NOTE: In extreme weather, either hot or cold, please give us a shipping address where your order may be properly received and stored. Corti Brothers cannot be responsible for items left without protection. Please order early for best selection.

CARIBBEAN RUM: FOURSQUARE DISTILLERY, Barbados

PROBITAS, pronounced with the accent on the pro, means “honest/trustworthy.” It is also the name of a White Blended rum from Foursquare Distillery on the island of Barbados in the Caribbean. But it is a blended rum, coming from two distilleries and two different locations. One is Barbados; the other Jamaica. The Barbadian fraction is produced on Barbados in a traditional Coffey column still and the other fraction, on a double retort pot still, from the Hampden distillery on Jamaica. The blend is delicious and not your usual “white” rum.

For one thing, it is just slightly yellow in color from aging. But it has the elements of what I think white rum should have: a clean, fragrant aroma, clean fresh taste and flavor, not dark rum flavor, but a light flavor with a pleasant softness. Since we are headed into warmer weather, this is a rum to keep in mind for making mixed drinks with real character and appeal. It would make a delicious “P’tit Punch” aperitif with a shot of rum mixed with the juice of half a lime. Quite satisfying with a cube of ice or just as is. Put into a glass of fresh orange juice, it improves the orange juice.

As a riff on the “Gold Cup” from the Disney World Yacht Club, use the Probitas White rum.

1.25 oz. Probitas White Rum
.75 oz Orange Curacao
1 oz each: Sour Mix, orange juice and pineapple juice
½ oz grenadine
Build in a shaker over ice. Shake and serve.

FOURSQUARE 2010 is a 12 year old exceptional cask selection rum aged in ex bourbon barrels. It is a blended rum, but all from Barbados, merely two different still productions. One is a pot still, the other a column still. The rum was distilled and matured at Foursquare Rum Distillery on Barbados. It is a high proof, 60 % alcohol, with no sweetener, other flavor or added color. Just how it came from cask. Normally, I am not fond of this level of alcohol, but in this case it is appropriate and really delicious and savory. Not chill filtered, with ice it will cloud slightly, so don’t get alarmed. This is completely natural. It is a lovely drink!

FOURSQUARE PROBITAS WHITE RUM 47% Barbados and Jamaica \$34.99+CRV 750ml (#5934)

FOURSQUARE 2010 BARBADOS RUM 60% \$100.99 +CRV 750ml (#5935)

WILD FISH CANNERY SMOKED WILD ALASKAN WHITE KING SALMON

This is a real rarity. White salmon is a natural sport of salmon. It is not exactly “white,” but a very, very pale pinkish white. It happens when the particular fish is not able to assimilate color from the small, pink/red colored plankton which salmon eat. A white salmon looks just like a normal salmon from the outside. It is only, once caught and being processed, do you note the color. Usually these fish are taken by the fishermen for their own delectation. At the Wild Fish Cannery in Alaska, these fish are cut, smoked, and tinned when found. Right now some stock is available and you should try it. Only 5% or so of the wild Alaskan King salmon caught is this “White” King Salmon. It is wild harvested, smoked and hand packed in Alaska in 6 oz tins. Packed in water, there is no extra oil added since the fish is already rather rich. A really lovely twist on pasta with tuna sauce would be to use this wild white King salmon. 6oz tin.

WILD FISH CANNERY SMOKED WILD ALASKAN WHITE KING SALMON \$15.99 (#5936)

RIGA GOLD SARDINES IN JAR (Sprats, actually)

Riga, the capital of the country of Latvia, one of the Baltic States, produces a lovely fish product which historically has been called **SPRAT**. It comes from a small Atlantic/Baltic Sea fish called *Sprattus sprattus*. Originally and still, they can be found in a small, flat round tin, but Corti Brothers has been having very good sales with another presentation in a jar. *Sprattus sprattus* belongs to the herring family, which also includes sardines. Hence, the obvious name mixup. The tins are labeled Sprats; the jars, Sardines.

However, the product is delicious and with interest very much growing for tinned fish, **RIGA GOLD SMOKED SARDINES ARE SOMETHING YOU SHOULD TRY**. They are made with only two ingredients: refined olive oil and salt. The fish are lightly smoked, then headed and tailed, and packed in olive oil with a touch of salt, hand placed in their glass jar. Refined olive oil is used since it doesn't harden when cold and actually is just a clean, lightly flavorsome medium to keep the fish soft and to help preserve them. What you want to taste is the fish not the oil.

Riga, Latvia's capital, was founded in 1158 by German merchants from Bremen as a trading post. The three countries which make up the Baltics are Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia--all located just south of Sweden/Finland, on the Baltic Sea. Since the early 1900s, Riga Sprats have been famous as a traditional fish product in this part of Northern Europe. They are always wild caught and naturally smoked.

Very versatile, these Smoked Sardines can be enjoyed as they are with just some good rye bread, with a simple salad or mixed with pasta. Very healthy with Omega 3 oils, they are an easy way to enjoy a lightly smoked taste, elegant, mild flavor and get nutrition besides. What could be simpler?

A really quick to do snack, canape or "tapa" would be a slice of good rye bread, layered with slices of hard boiled egg and topped with Riga Gold Smoked Sardine. Accompanied by a good beer or some cold vodka.

RIGA GOLD SMOKED SARDINES 9.5 oz jar \$7.99 (#5937) Case of 6 jars \$43.00 (#5937C)

A NEW ANTINORI EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL FROM TUSCANY: Tenuta Bartolina

In 1972, Corti Brothers began importing extra virgin olive oil from the Marchesi Antinori property named Santa Cristina in Chianti Classico, now called Tignanello. This was followed by the oil from their Umbrian property, Castello della Sala, in Orvieto Classico. These two oils left us after the freeze in 1985. But now we have oil from a new Antinori property in the Maremma of southern Tuscany.

TENUTA BARTOLINA produces only oil, not wine and oil! It is planted to Tuscan varieties, mainly a unique variety, Leccio del Corno and then to smaller amounts of Maurino, Leccino and Rossellino. The first and last varieties are later maturing ones. The 2023 harvest started with the early varieties, Maurino and Leccino, on 9 October, followed by the later ripening varieties three weeks later. 2023 harvest is limited to 4,600--500ml bottles. Tenuta Bartolina was entered in the 2024 Los Angeles International Olive Oil competition. (Disclosure: I am the Chairman of this competition, but do not taste.) Bartolina won a **Gold Medal** and **Best of Class** in Tuscan oil, medium intensity. This is a high polyphenol oil, excellently balanced with bitterness and pungency, with a lovely balanced finish. It is a really excellent oil! It is also brand new to our market.

TENUTA BARTOLINA, Az. Ag. ANTINORI, Extra Virgin Oil

\$37.99 500ml (#5938) \$205.00 cs/6 (#5938C)

AVE ATQUE VALE
DOROTHY TCHELISTCHEFF 1924–2023

Dorothy Tchelistcheff was the second wife of Napa Valley's famed André Tchelistcheff. After André's death in 1994, she and I spoke almost every Sunday morning until her passing on Thanksgiving, 2023. She was looking forward—with some dread—to her 100th birthday in June. Dorothy was André's one time secretary and after they married, his traveling partner, confidant, secretary, and towards the end of his life, his chauffeur. Dorothy was a consummate housekeeper, excellent cook, splendid needlepointer, and friend.

Until André became too ill to do it, the Tchelistcheffs put on two annual Blini parties before the beginning of Orthodox Lent. At these blini parties, Dorothy used the following recipe to make the blini in several 6 inch frying pans. The blini were lovely, and I will give you the recipe since they are what I make at home. In her recipe card box which I now have, she noted every thing that would be used for a party of 20 guests. The party always started with Champagne, which if one wanted, could be continued. But vodka, especially Zubrovka, was the drink of choice. The blini were accompanied by Riga sprats, herring in wine sauce, Matjes herring cut into strips, thinly sliced smoked salmon, smoked boneless shad (if available), sour cream, melted butter, caviar and hard boiled eggs--both whites and yolks sieved separately. Once cooked, the blini can be put into a cloth lined pot with a lid and kept in a just warm oven until ready to serve.

Hot consommé was served when you had eaten your fill of blini, followed by raspberry sorbet and black tea with jam to end. I enjoyed these parties from 1970 until 1994. André used to say that in his youth in Russia, the amount of blini to be enjoyed was measured by putting your elbow on the table and then flattening your hand. That was the measure that Rob Davis, wine maker at Jordan winery and I, never got up to, but close!

Here is



Dorothy's recipe for BLINI.

1 cake or 1 package of yeast
3 cups warm milk
3 cups flour (white flour because André did not like buckwheat flour.)
3 eggs separated ½ cup sweet butter ½ teaspoon each salt and sugar

Start about 9 or 10 a.m. Dissolve yeast in ½ cup warm milk. Add enough flour to form a sponge (about ¼ cup) Let rise about 3 hours. Cream egg yolks, butter salt and sugar. Add yeast sponge, remaining flour and the rest of warm milk. Beat well. Let stand about 1 hour. Half an hour before cooking, beat egg whites, add to the mixture and let rest ½ hour. Thin as needed with milk.

Using a small brush, grease pan with soft, unsalted butter. The amount of batter to use per each blin is about 1/3 of a cup. (Her recipe remarks to use a slice of carrot attached to a fork to butter the pan) Since blini are actually fried in the butter, use only enough to make a coating in the hot pan. André always said blini should have a pretty design to the cooked faces. And above is what Dorothy showed they should look like. (Note: This batter keeps very well for several days. You can make more of the batter and store in fridge until using. Bring to room temperature before cooking.)

CORTI BROTHERS ORDER FORM

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CORTI BROTHERS

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SPRING 2024

**LOISON AND COCCHI COLOMBAS, LINGHAM'S CHILLI SAUCE,
UCHIBORI DAIGINJO and BLACK VINEGARS, CARIBBEAN RUMS,
OUR SELECTION OF 2023 OILS, SMOKED WHITE KING SALMON,
RIGA SPRATS, NEW ANTINORI OIL, Tenuta Bartolina, DOROTHY'S
BLINI RECIPE.**

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