



Would you like to know the real story of Panettone?

Here's the whiskey-soaked, raisin-studded, more Italian characters that you can shake a stick at, real story.



Once upon a time, young Ughetto degli Atellani fell in love with beautiful Adalgisa, the daughter of the village baker. So strong was Ughetto's desire to spend time with her, he pretended to be a pastry chef to get a job at her dad's bakery. As it often happens to the brave, he struck success when, in an attempt to save the bakery from bankruptcy, he changed the recipe of its bread to something richer, made with flour, eggs, butter, sugar and raisins—the first panettone. Needless to say, it was a success, the bakery gained all its clients back and Ughetto and Adalgisa lived happily ever after.

Except.....ughett means "raisin" in the Milanese dialect which is just a little too convenient, isn't it?

Well, maybe the real story is that panettone wasn't the brainchild of Ughetto, but Ughetta, a nun who lived in a small convent on the verge of financial ruin. There was very little to celebrate Christmas, but sister Ughetta was not the type to surrender to life hardships so easily. Stubbornly, she decided that she and her sisters were to have a lovely Christmas in spite of the lack of food or money so



she made up a cake with all the leftovers ingredients she could find. Before putting it in the oven, she cut a cross on top of it, which gave it a peculiarly four-sectioned domed shape once it was baked. Do you recognize it? Yes, it was the first panettone!



If you don't believe either of these two stories, maybe you'll believe this last one. Toni, the young helper of the absent-minded chef for the Duke of Milan, was the real inventor. It was Christmas and the court chef had no dessert to offer the Duke—he had forgotten the cake in the oven and burnt it!

So, Toni, noticing his boss' desperation, prepared something using everything he had available. Hence the name panettone, "il pan de Toni" or Toni's Bread, to honor its clever inventor.

Truth is, the history of panettone is unknown and which myth you hear depends on whose Italian grandmother you ask. The first written evidence of panettone as we know it—minus the yeast—dates back to the Renaissance and ties the specialty directly to the court of the Sforza in Milan. In 1470, it was traditional to keep a piece of the sweet bread from one Christmas to the next as it was thought to bring luck.

Fast forward almost four centuries to 1839 and look in Cherubini's Milanese-Italian dictionary and you'll find "panatton del Natal" recorded as a type of sweet bread.

But it was just after the end of World War I, that panettone became widely known thanks to a young baker from Milan, Angelo Motta, who gave his name to one of Italy 's now best-known brands. Motta revolutionized the traditional way of making panettone by giving it its tall domed shape by making the dough rise three times, before cooking, which is what makes it so light.



To this day, when we talk about the origins of panettone, the circumstances of its creation are foggier than an autumn day in Milan. In the end, though, there are two things that we know for sure: first, it's the most popular and recognized sweet from Milan and second, it is incredibly delicious!

Have you ever wondered how panettone is made? If so, [click here](#) to watch a short video. It's an amazing process!

Hungry for some panettone? Here's how you can get a free one now.

Be one of the first 10 people to email Karen Zimmerman at [***bobzkarenz@att.net***](mailto:bobzkarenz@att.net) with the word "Panettone" in the subject line and you'll get instruction for how to receive one.

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