



Will they be *Chiacchiere*? *Cuccidati*? *Baci di Dama*? *Anginetti*? Whatever she's making, she will follow the recipes handed down from generation to generation—and they will always be good.

Eeny, Meeny, Miny, Moe...

Remember the line, "Leave the gun, take the cannoli?" There was no way Clemenza was leaving his Italian pastries behind--and with good reason.

Have you ever walked into a well-stocked Italian bakery and been bedazzled with the many different choices with names that are sometimes unpronounceable? Just what is *Pasticcini alle mandorle*? *Chiacchiere*? *Anginetti*? Italy has more types of cookies than they do people. We're going to take a look at some of the variety and then we're going to make you an offer at the end you can't refuse.

Let's get started.

Chiacchiere (little gossips) or Bugie (lies)



Beautifully crisp-fried sprinkled with powdered sugar. Light, airy—and noisy! They are called Chiacchiere due to the noise and crunch while eating the crispy dough, or Bugie because they're flat when you make them but they puff up when cooked--little liars!



Cuccidati

These delightful pretty Sicilian Christmas cookies are made with a filling of fig, date, hazelnut, orange zest and a splash of brandy. Bakers may mold them into Christmas shapes, like wreaths or lambs, or just cut them into squares and coat them with colorful sprinkles.

Regina (Queen) or Sesame

These lightly sweetened cookies are thought to originate in Palermo, Sicily. They supposedly were named for Queen Margherita who loved sweets (also pizza since they named one of those after her, too). We made these for one of our Regional events.



Sicilian Vanilla - In the letter "S" for—Sicily!



Anginetti - A light, melt in your mouth lemon delight.



Baci di Dama (Hazelnut Cookies)

This cookie means “lady’s kisses” in Italian. The inside spread consists of a decadent dark chocolate filling. Legend has it a pastry chef answered the request of Prince Vittorio Emanuele II in 1852 to create a new cookie — and these were the ones. Using just four ingredients: hazelnuts, chocolate, sugar, and butter, the end result and name (kisses) sealed the deal for the prince. After all, they resemble sensual lips pursed together while bestowing a kiss, the chocolate being the glue that binds the lips together. (Those romantic Italians!)

A word to the wise: making these cookies are not for sissies!

Ossi dei Morte (Bones of the Dead)

Leave it to the Italians to commemorate the dead through a culinary masterpiece like Ossi Dei Morti, shaped to resemble bones. It's a crunchy, airy cookie and are typically made on November 1, All Saint's Day. They were meant to honor loved ones that had passed away.



Pignoli

What would Italian bakers do without their pine nuts? Pignoli cookies, a staple in southern Italy and Sicily, are crispy on the outside, chewy on the inside, and delicious. The dough is easy to make - almond paste, egg whites, flour and sugar. And don't be looking for a substitute for almond paste; it enhances the flavor and helps the cookies brown easily. Bring money to the store; pine nuts are not cheap! But they are delicious.



Amaretti ("little bitter things")

Crisp cookies made from ground almonds or almond paste. They originated in Venice during the Renaissance. Made with sugar and egg whites, they can be chewy or crunchy. Amaretti derives from amaro, which means bitter, so if the ones at your local bakery are not made with bitter almonds, they're not the real thing.

We could go on with more--Biscotti (of course), Pizzelle, Savoiardi, Quarisinali, Ciambelle al Vino (wine cookies)--the list is endless. If any of the cookies here tickled your fancy and you'd like to try one (or two), the recipes are all posted on the Club's website (www.lhitalianclub.org) under the tab "La Cucina," ready for you to make now or in time for the holidays!

And here's the offer you just can't refuse: Make any of these cookies and take your photo with them. Send the photo to Karen at bobzkarenz@att.net by October 30 and we'll send you a \$5 coupon for a future event.

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