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## **'Land of History and Romance': Consuming Nostalgia Through the British Italian Cookbook**

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### **[to cite]:**

Elizabeth Parsons and Benedetta Cappellini (2011) , "'Land of History and Romance': Consuming Nostalgia Through the British Italian Cookbook", in NA - Advances in Consumer Research Volume 39, eds. Rohini Ahluwalia, Tanya L. Chartrand, and Rebecca K. Ratner, Duluth, MN : Association for Consumer Research, Pages: 392-397.

### **[url]:**

<http://www.acrwebsite.org/volumes/1010005/volumes/v39/NA-39>

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# **'Land of History and Romance': Consuming Nostalgia through the British Italian Cookbook**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

In this paper we explore the role of nostalgia in the production and consumption of British Italian cookbooks. We provide an interpretive analysis of British Italian cookbooks from across the 51 year period 1954-2005 exploring the ways in which their authors evoke past times, people and places in their promotion of Italian cuisine. Undeniably food as an ultimately sensual product which we engage with on an intimate level 'may be particularly effective in transporting consumers back in time' (Baker, Karrer and Veeck 2005, 402). Through examining the nostalgic rendering of Italian food culture in British Italian cookbooks, we explore some of the ways in which these books might transport the consumer back in time.

Although there is a growing interest in understanding food consumption, the majority of consumer studies dedicate their attention to looking at people's practices and discourses (Marshall 2005). What we know much less about is how such everyday food consumption practices, and the market mythologies attached to them, are *re-constructed* in texts such as cookbooks. Although there is a growing interest amongst consumer researchers in looking at 'symbolic meanings, cultural ideals, and inducements encoded in popular culture texts' (Arnould and Thompson 2005, 875), little has been said about culinary representations. Despite some recent exceptions (Brownlie, Hower and Horne 2005; Schneider and Davis 2010) the written world of food remains an understudied topic of investigation in the consumer research community. In addition consumer researchers have long been interested in the role of nostalgia in the consumption process (Baker and Kennedy 1994; Havlena and Holak 1996; Holbrook and Schindler 2003). However, as yet little work has explored the role of nostalgia in relation to the written word. This focus on the written text is particularly apposite because it embraces both the author and reader in the production and consumption of nostalgic discourse. Such a focus then blurs the boundaries between production and consumption given the dialectic relationship between author and reader. Within this relationship nostalgic discourses are co-produced, reinterpreted and mobilized by both parties for specific ends (which we explore in the course of the paper).

With the above absences in mind in this paper we explore the British-Italian cookbook as consumption text but also on a wider level as a cultural artefact. Cookbooks offer us insights into the axis of political, cultural and social context of their making. They have been seen by a range of scholars as important historical – cultural resources, examined as cultural artefacts to be studied in relation to their cultural and social contexts (McDonagh and Prothero 2005). Considered not simply a collection of food recipes, they have been studied as a privileged source in representing 'unusual cultural tales' and 'revealing artefacts of culture in the making' (Appadurai 1988, 22). Most recently, consumer researchers have identified cookbooks 'as constructed social forms which are amenable to textual analysis' (Brownlie et al. 2005, 7). We similarly explore British Italian cookbooks through this lens using a socio-historical approach. The paper begins with a review of relevant literature and outline of the interpretive approach to textual analysis pursued. This is followed by a socio-historical analysis of cookbooks as cultural artefacts. In closing we observe our contributions to existing theorisation of nostalgia and culinary representations within consumer research.

## **CULINARY CULTURE, CONSUMPTION AND NOSTALGIA**

In this paper we use two specific strands of literature to aid us in our project of exploring representations of Italian culinary culture. The first is work within consumer research which explores the role of nostalgia in structuring consumer meanings and experiences. The second includes work from cultural geographers which explores the evocation of place through what might be termed 'nostalgic food cultures'.

Consumer researchers have long found the idea of nostalgia useful in understanding consumer motivations and behaviours (Baker and Kennedy 1994; Havlena and Holak 1996; Holbrook and Schindler 2003). The nostalgia concept is useful here in that it not only encompasses memories and imaginings of the past, but idealised versions of these memories with their negative elements largely stripped away (Goulding 1999). A second vital component of nostalgia is that it generally acts as a counterpoint to a less attractive, and most often undesirable, present. Another element of nostalgia, according to Davis (1979), includes a longing for past experiences. However, as we are at pains to illustrate in this paper, nostalgic consumption does not have to rely on individual experience, rather what we have seen in recent years is an increased and deliberate commodification of nostalgic experience (Brown 2001), in product design (Weaving 2008), retail environments (Maclaran and Brown 2005) and historical theme parks and leisure environments (Goulding 1999) and of course (cook)books. The impetus behind this marketing drive, and the attendant consumption of these products, is undoubtedly increasing consumer anxiety in the face of a fragmented global postmodern consumer culture wherein consumers struggle for stable reference points for their sense of identification and belonging (Strauth and Turner 1988). In Western affluent contexts the market reaction is a plundering of the past in attempts to reclaim, and repackage for sale to the consumer, a sense of place, belonging and authenticity. However, while we observe that there has certainly been a recent resurgence of market interest in past times, and this is where our socio-historical approach becomes significant, our analysis shows nostalgic consumption has much earlier roots and is likely to be part of a more deep seated human condition (Davis 1979).

Baker and Kennedy (1994) delineate three levels of nostalgia: real, simulated and collective; they argue that each level has a different degree of attendant emotional intensity. While we observe that these levels are perhaps a little discrete they do usefully identify the nuances in individual experience (real), the role of the media and other objects in simulating nostalgia (simulated) and the role of collectivities in nostalgic experience (collective) such as culture, generation or nation. Our analysis identifies elements of all three of these levels of nostalgia. Often cookbook narratives rely on the author's individual experiences, but equally, and simultaneously they evoke collective nostalgia surrounding Italian landscape, people and food cultures, in addition these cookbooks in themselves might be seen as simulating (and indeed stimulating) nostalgic experiences in the consumer.

In their interpretive exploration of nostalgia as a driver of consumption Holbrook and Schindler (2003), similarly identify the collective dimension of nostalgia. They attribute this collective dimension of nostalgia in the UK and US to the Baby Boomer generation. However, in this paper we relate nostalgia very closely to individu-

al consumer experience drawing on earlier work in this respect (Holbrook and Hirschman 1982). In our examination of British Italian cookbooks while we do explore the experiences of the authors in framing nostalgia we also emphasise the commodification of nostalgia on a more general and collective level. The stories and images of Italy that emerge from our reading do not necessarily always rely on the reader/consumers past experiences for their meaning.

Both consumer researchers (Brownlie et al. 2005; Hewer and Brownlie 2007) and others (Appadurai 1988; Cinotto 2005) have explored the ways in which cookbooks represent and reproduce national cultures and identities. Geographers have also been interested in nostalgia and its links to food in helping them to understand the ways in which places are imagined and become meaningful. Duruz's (2005) evocative interweaving of participants food stories, everyday practices and memories to explore the themes of identity, place, ethnicity and belonging in London and Sydney really emphasises the strength of links between imagined food cultures and a sense of place. She finds in these stories a 'nostalgia for 'traditional' country cooking and the 'past', she also observes the 'catalogues of the effort these women make towards maintaining their culinary heritage' (2005, 67). As such we should also recognise the significance of cookbooks in maintaining culinary heritage. This is particularly the case for cookbooks at the beginning of the period we study where there is no doubt that the authors were keen to both promote and preserve a particular version of Italian culinary heritage. As such the stories that we will be exploring below are attempts at preserving a slice of Italian history as much as they are instructions in Italian cooking.

However, we want to acknowledge the potential pitfalls and misrepresentations of talking about a definitive Italian food culture. In our globalised world it can be argued that all cuisines are necessarily 'hybrid' (Cook, Crang and Thorpe 2000; Duruz 2005). As Cook et al. observe: 'ingredients, knowledges, technologies and practices – culinary and otherwise – cannot have any straightforward 'origins'' instead they identify the 'messy boundary crossings of ingredients, cuisines, people and their histories' (2000, 113). It is in this spirit that we explore the narratives within British Italian cookbooks as hybrid and contested.

**METHODOLOGY**

This paper emerges from a wider study looking at the representation and consumption of Italian food in the UK. In this paper we provide an interpretive reading of continuities and discontinuities of discourses surrounding nostalgia as they emerged in representations of Italian food in cookbooks. Our approach follows previous interpretive consumer studies providing a critical reading of media discourses in popular magazines (Martens and Scott 2005; Schneider and Davis 2010) and cookbooks (Brownlie et al. 2005). As Brewis and Jack (2005, 51) point out providing a critical reading implies that we do not assert that what we understand from the cookbooks is what

authors intended to communicate, or even what consumers would see in these texts. Our interpretive reading would offer 'a think piece, a broad-brush polemic' (Brewis and Jack 2005, 51) and as such it provides one understanding of how discourses about nostalgia have been reconstructed in the examined cookbooks. Our reading focused on Italian culinary culture, the authors' travel stories and anecdotes about Italy as well as recipes, products, cooking and shopping practices. In the current paper we have focused on the nostalgic representation of Italy and its culinary culture and the way consumers are encouraged to reconstruct a nostalgic food experience in their homes.

A multicultural team iterated the analysis and as such a 'triangulation across co-authors led to new insights and resolved differences in interpretation' (Askegaard, Arnould and Kjeldgaard 2005, 163). The triangulation across authors does not simply increase the validity of our analysis, but most importantly enriches our interpretive reading by combining two understandings of the examined discourses. One author is Italian, and thus familiar with Italian food culture, Italian ingredients, dishes, domestic consumption practices, and mealtime conventions; and one author is English and thus familiar with similar elements of British food culture. Data analysis and interpretation followed the general form used in interpretive research and hence a continuous interaction between data and theoretical frameworks has been privileged as a crucial part of the hermeneutical process (Spiggle, 1994; Thompson, 1997).

Following previous research looking at food discourses in a socio-historical perspective (Martens and Scott 2005; Schneider and Davis 2010) our sample has been selected using a chronological criteria. 8 cookbooks have been selected from 1954 to 1974, 22 cookbooks from 1975 to 1995 and 14 cookbooks from 1996 to 2005. The first period is relatively underrepresented because of the scarcity of published cookbooks, rather the second period is overrepresented because of the explosion of cookbooks published in the late seventies (see Cinotto, 2005). Another sampling criterion was based on the popularity of the writer. Celebrity chefs, such as Elizabeth Davis (1954), Jamie Oliver (2005) were selected together with less popular cookbooks recommended by these celebrities. This criterion was applied because, as scholars have shown (Brownlie et al. 2005), celebrity chefs have had a significant impact on British food culture.

**ANALYSIS: THREE PERIODS OF NOSTALGIA**

From our analysis we have identified three distinct periods wherein discourses around nostalgia have been reconstructed in different ways (see table 1). Each of these periods is not a discrete stage with a clear beginning and end, rather periods overlap and continuities and discontinuities with the previous and subsequent phases are evident. Given this, it is still possible to identify a broad set of features which characterise each period as distinct.

**Table 1 Changing Representations of Nostalgia in British Italian Cookbooks 1954-2005**

	<b>1954-1970 An Exotic and Rich Culinary Heritage</b>	<b>1971-1986 A Romanticised, Pre-modern Past</b>	<b>1990-2005 The Simple and Authentic Life</b>
<b>Intended readership</b>	Affluent housewife	Working mother	Male or female cook
<b>Discourses of Nostalgia</b>	Real nostalgia: escaping post-war food rationalisation	Simulated nostalgia: escaping the juggling lifestyle	Collective nostalgia: escaping a collective and frenetic lifestyle
<b>Consuming Nostalgia</b>	Shopping and cooking exotic products	Cooking convenient dishes	Following culinary gurus's shopping recommendations

### 1954- 1970 An Exotic and Rich Culinary Heritage

This period is characterised by the production of books written by women with a direct link to Italy. These authors frequently refer to their own past travel experiences in evoking a very personalized nostalgic view of Italy's glorious culinary past. Some of these authors were British middleclass female authors with a taste for travel such as Elizabeth Davis (1954) and others were middle class Italian immigrant women such as Taglienti (1956). The autobiographical notes, which appear in the introduction as well as in the presentation of the recipes, illustrate the writer's privileged consumption experiences, such as dinner with diplomats and Italian aristocrats or adventurous lunches at village festivals.

The intended readership consists of housewives who need to be "educated" and guided in their new consumption experiences of dealing with exotic Italian products.

*There is, I know, a school of writers who seem to believe that English housewives are weak in the head and must not be exposed to the truth about the cooking of other countries; must not shocked by the idea of making a yeast dough, cleaning an ink-fish, adding nutritive value to a soup with olive oil [...]* (David 1963, 25n6).

While cookbooks of this period are addressed to a female readership, it is not the case that women from all walks of life are targeted. Indeed authors seem to address women who share similar privileged and nostalgic consumption experiences, or at least those who aspire to share in such privilege (and the associated cultural capital) through the acquisition of knowledge of foreign cuisines.

*Do you remember your first meal on the Rome Express after you left Modena? Or your first fettuccini at Alfredo's in Rome? Or the café granita at Doney's in Florence? If your tongue still quivers at the thought of the succulent scaloppine con olive, the pasta golden and its sugo di formaggio e burro, the icy block coffee crystals melting on your tongue on a hot day, this book will fill you with nostalgia as well as nourishments. If, on the other hand, you are as yet unacquainted with these joys of Italian cooking, it will introduce you to many new gastronomic delights* (Taglienti, 1956, 1)

This complicity between reader and writer rooted in the cultural capital of the privileged leisured class is illustrated in recalling nostalgic memories of exclusive cafes in Florence, luxurious train rides but also ingredients and dishes. The author entreats the reader to recreate her own sense of nostalgia through buying familiar products and transforming them into dishes which are familiar from their pasts. Also the author invites readers who have not experienced this culinary past to invent these memories in their kitchen, through consuming new products and transforming them into evocative dishes.

The nostalgic tone of this period seems particularly acute in some cookbooks, like Elizabeth Davis's (1950) *Mediterranean Food* where in the author's adventures in the South of Europe are compared with 'icy and hungry weeks' in London (David 1950, X). As she describes, recalling food experiences from the past is an enjoyable way to escape the present. In a passage that is particularly evocative of Murcott's (1995, 225) observation that cookbooks are a 'representation of imaginary experiences remote from everyday life'; David's descriptions of the food as 'richly flavoured' and 'brightly coloured' must have contrasted sharply with the food available in the rather drab post war years of early 1950s England:

*But even if people could not very often make the dishes here described, it was stimulating to think about them; to escape from the*

*deadly boredom of queuing and frustration of buying the weekly rations: to read about real food cooked with wine and olive oil, eggs and butter and cream, and dishes richly flavoured with onions, garlic, herbs, and brightly coloured Southern vegetables [...] I took refuge from reality writing down memories of the food I had cooked and eaten during my Mediterranean years.* (David 1950, X)

In describing the disappointing present in England these cookbooks seem to talk to a leisured class who is encouraged to take refuge in their past through exotic products and challenging consumption practices. Also these books seem to deliberately play upon aspiration through the mobilization of nostalgic discourse. Readers who have not had these privileged travel experiences are encouraged to imagine and recreate them through learning new food consumption skills and practices at home.

### 1971-1986 A Romanticised, Pre-modern Past

At the end of the Seventies and during the Eighties the numbers of cookbooks really took off (Cinotto 2005). Cookbooks written by writers with no evident links with Italian culture started to appear. Although there are still cookbooks written by Italian immigrants (Hazan, 1980) or British travellers, many publications are written by authors not claiming any travel experiences in Italy or childhood memories about Italian food. Also cookbooks written by supermarket chains, like Sainsbury's (Reynolds 1981), appeared. The increased numbers of publications generate a heterogeneous representation in terms of advised ingredients, recipes and cooking techniques. In fact there are cookbooks only for vegetarians, for single people, for fast cooking, for low fat cooking, but also for cooking only one dish like pasta or pizza. This fragmentation of Italian food representations seems to reflect a more general trend involving the fragmentation and increasing incoherence of food discourses during this period, in particular those surrounding food choice which commentators have termed gastronomy (Fischler 1993).

While cookbooks from this period re-present Italian food in contradictory terms regarding shopping and cooking advice, they are very homogenous in presenting a nostalgic idea of Italy and its gastronomic culture. The author's biographic notes about Italy and its food gradually disappear but descriptions of villages and small communities immersed in a fairyland become very popular.

*To buy food at the market you have to get up early, because by eight o'clock the best has already gone. Peasants from villages near and far will not miss coming to town on market day. They used to either walk from miles away, or come in donkey and horse carts, but motorcycles and cars are now the more usual transport. But the market atmosphere remains unchanged.* (Birch 1985, 17)

This new nostalgic tone is used to describe an Italian society immersed in a past without time and space coordinates. The same tone is also adopted in illustrating Italian food. Italian cuisine is described as 'authentic', a term used to underline how the food is a product of a society bypassed by modernity and thus uncorrupted by modern life. As this author points out 'a typical Italian meal is still very much as it was in the eighteenth century' (Barker 1979, 6).

Another new element of this nostalgic representation is the emphasis on the Italian family, especially Italian women as mothers. Introduced as the centre of Italian society, the family is also depicted as the centre of gastronomic activity. As Marcella Hazan observes

'eating in Italy is essentially a family art, practised for and by the family' (1980, 4). The everyday work surrounding family meals is depicted solely as the preserve of women (in particular mothers). Represented as housewives devoted to their husbands and children, women are usually illustrated in the act of serving a meal, cooking or preparing food.

*For although the legal position of women in Italy has improved greatly over the last two decades, it is still rare, though known, for babbo to turn his hand to cooking- never the washing up of course!- and in the family it is still basically mamma who runs the show. She forms her children's taste in food so firmly that it remains with them all their lives. (Spike-Huges and Charmain 1986, 7)*

The emphasis on Italian mothers as housewives "enjoying" feeding their family, is particularly relevant if we consider that cookbooks of this period are not aimed at upper and middle class housewives, but at working women who, as studies suggest, juggle their domestic practices with restricted budgets and inflexible time schedules (Thompson 1996). In fact cookbooks "talking" to working mothers emphasise the convenience of Italian recipes which can be prepared quickly and easily with locally available products.

*The above traditional technique still stands and works wonderfully with imported Italian rice. If we have time we prefer the traditional, grand method. If we do not have the time, there are still ways to make risotto in the modern kitchen. There are two ways to go, depending on the cook ware as well as the rice in the market. (Romagnoli and Romagnoli, 1980:135)*

We notice a contradiction in the representation of Italian food in this period. On the one hand Italy and its culinary culture are represented through the apparently "relaxed" lifestyle of Italian mothers who not having a job outside the home, have time to leisurely shop in local markets and generally enjoy the work of feeding their family. On the other hand the recipes and consumption practices are addressed to British working women and therefore highlight the economy, both in terms of time and effort, of Italian cooking. We interpret this contradiction as a simulated nostalgia (Baker and Kennedy 1994) where consumers are not required to revisit their own past in order to reconstruct their nostalgia, they can access their simulated nostalgic experience through mass produced items, and convenient recipes saving time and effort in their kitchens. In other words British readers could aspire to live in this "once upon a time" dreamland, with very little effort. Mothers in full time employment with juggling lifestyles can, in part, buy into the figure of the time rich Italian mother who unproblematically places family first by consuming convenient Italian recipes.

### 1990-2005 The Simple and Authentic Life

In this period the production of cookbooks increases further and the representation of Italian culinary culture becomes even more fragmented than in the previous period (Cinotto 2005). While there is a very heterogeneous representations of recipes, advice and recommendations, images and ideas of Italy as a country are resonant with the representation of the previous period. Descriptions of a harmonic country which remains untouched by modernity are frequently illustrated through images of children wearing traditional dresses, crowded little markets, and devoted housewives preparing family meals.

*Despite the advent of industrialization and mass-marketing, traditional foods are still central to the cultural identity of each re-*

*gion. This is partly due to the way in which recipes are learned: orally passed from generation to generation, and rarely written down in cookbooks, they survive in families for years with little or no changes made to them. (Capalbo 2001, 6)*

Italy is depicted as a country firmly rooted in tradition, a place where globalisation has yet to impact on people's food habits, where recipes are orally passed from generation to generation. In some cases these descriptions are explicitly political in tone, the below extract depicts Italian culinary culture as actively resistant to the forces of globalisation:

*The Common market may eventually impose American uniformity on Europe, in generations to come the food may become uniformly tasteless [...] If the forces of mediocrity are gathering, Italy will be the last centre of resistance. (Barrett 1993, VII)*

In this period references to Italian mothers and British working mothers seem to disappear. This is probably due to fact that many male culinary gurus (Cinotto 2005), such as TV chefs like Jamie Oliver and famous restaurateurs like Antonio Carluccio, dominate the production of cookbooks. Although their representations of Italian food vary, their intended audience is very similar. As the restaurateur Aldo Zilli emphasises, his intended audience consists of 'working people', regardless of their gender, social class or household composition.

*My main aim is to give you an insight into Italian cooking, showing you how easy it is to create delicious dishes. Forget the fuss! Simplicity is the key....some of them (recipes) are so quick and easy that they are great for working people who do not have much time to cook. (Zilli 1998, VIII)*

Stressing the idea that Italian food is a convenient option, in terms of saving time and effort, the intended audience becomes defined in terms of lifestyle. There are explicit references to people who cannot afford to spend time (and effort) in the kitchen, but that would like to cook their own meals.

As with the authors from the fifties, celebrities emphasise their Italian origins or their travels in Italy as a guarantee of their competence in reproducing an "authentic" Italian food experience. This is especially the case with Jamie Oliver who's book: Jamie's Italy (2005) is a description of his gastronomic tour of the country. This book is noteworthy as in many respects it epitomises the way in which Italy and its gastronomic culture are currently represented in the UK. In the book Jamie celebrates the pre-modern, slow pace of Italian life, which he describes in these terms:

*I've witnessed so many young people and teenagers in Italy living a 'modern-day-life' which we would have seen in Britain seventy years ago- yes, they have mobile phones and computers but they're not seen as an essential part of everyday life and not as many people have them as here. (2005, XI)*

This nostalgic representation of Italy, as a country still in the past and unaffected by modernity, does not require a particular understanding. Indeed Italian cooking know-how is presented as thoroughly embodied by the culinary subject. Italian cooking skills are tacit in nature, absorbed in the course of everyday life in the family kitchen. As such Italian cooking is presented as accessible to all, as Oliver observes:

*The truth is, when I'm in Italy I feel Italian—even with my very basic grasp of the language I manage to get by, and you know*

why? Because, like all Italians, I love my family for better or for worse and because food has been something I've grown up around. (Oliver 2005, X)

This accessibility of old world Italian culture is extended to British consumers and offered as an antidote to British living, lost as it has been to the forces of modernity and globalisation. Here Italian culture is presented as offering readers an opportunity to revisit a nostalgic past, a past grounded in authenticity, where readers might escape from the anxieties of contemporary British life.

The "authentic" and nostalgic Italian experience is reconstructed with elements of continuity and discontinuities in relation to the cookbooks of the 1980s. As in previous cookbooks, in this period the nostalgic past is reconstructed through the concept of convenience. However, here convenience becomes even more specific, for example the required time is measured in minutes, and the required work is evaluated in more detail by the author. Saving time probably receives greatest emphasis, calculated for the entire process, from the preparation to the cooking. In addition the level of required cooking skills is also identified in many books, and there are suggestions as to how to reduce the amount of time and effort required (for example by using electronic devices such as food processors and microwaves).

### CONCLUSION

In this paper we have identified three different phases of nostalgic representation of Italy and its food. From this analysis we have three key observations to make about nostalgia and its role in the consumption experience. First we acknowledge the commodification of nostalgia, and second (drawing from Baker and Kennedy's 1994 earlier work) we observe that its form and intensity varies according to socio-historical context, finally we suggest that nostalgic food cultures and their representations are central to consumers' sense of identity and belonging.

Each of the periods analysed encompasses different modes of nostalgia, but all of them present nostalgia as a consumption experience that consumers can access through the shopping, cooking and display of Italian food. As such, our study highlights the commodification of nostalgia, which is portrayed as an "object" that can be consumed by following the author's shopping recommendations and cooking advice.

Our socio-historical approach to the analysis of these texts has also underlined the role of nostalgic consumption in escaping an undesirable present (Davis 1979). In each period the features of this undesirable present and its socio-economic underpinnings differs. The promotion of an exotic and rich food culture in the fifties is an antidote to a post-war country with a strict rationing of such foods. The promotion of a pre-modern, traditional food culture in the eighties is in response to the time poor "juggling lifestyle" required by the increased presence of women in the workplace during this period. In the most recent phase a simple and authentic food culture is emphasised in response to an increasingly fragmented, post-modern, inauthentic lifestyle.

In addition we see Baker and Kennedy's (1994) three levels of nostalgia (*real*, *simulated* and *collective*) reflected in each of these three periods with different emphases in each. In the first period the emphasis is on '*real*' nostalgic experience. Here authors rely on their own past experience and the text emerges as an intimate dialogue between the female author and imputed middle class female reader through remembered holidays and travels to Italy. This form of nostalgia represents a personal past which is shared with people who have had (or have aspired to have) the same experiences. Nostalgia is reconstructed through products and dishes from an individual past,

and as such the reader is invited to discover specific products in local shops and delicatessens, as well as "learn" new cooking skills. In the second period nostalgia is not a class based experience any longer, but rather a '*simulated*' experience wherein women can imagine (aspire to) a vaguely "better" reality, wherein life is suspended in a "once upon a time" atmosphere. Consumers are not required to revisit their own past in order to reconstruct their nostalgia, they can access their simulated nostalgic experience through mass produced items, and convenient recipes saving time and effort in the kitchen. In the last period nostalgia seems to have been democratized. It is not an experience reserved for women, but it is a '*collective*' dialogue wherein also men are admitted as authors and readers. Because it is not gender and class bound any longer, nostalgia is represented as a collective experience an escape from the current lifestyle available to everybody. However it is also an individual experience as cookbooks represent the celebrity gurus "own" version of nostalgia, which consumers can access through consumption. As in the first period nostalgia is consumable through shopping more than through other consumption practices. Indeed consumers are invited to recreate their nostalgic experience by rehearsing their cultural capital in their shopping trips to delicatessens and markets.

Finally, we'd like to make some comments about the consumption of these texts, in particular their context of consumption. In a contemporary Western consumer context where home cooking and dining and the traditional rituals, knowledges and practices associated with them are in decline, it is perhaps not surprising that the values of tradition, family and home are recurrent in the British Italian cookbooks we analysed. In fact evidence suggests that narratives of the kitchen table, the smells and sounds of home cooked food and the central role of the maternal figure are typical in remembrances of home across a range of cultural contexts (Duruz 2001). Cutting across all three periods we see nostalgia operating to invoke a sense of authenticity and belonging through consumption. In an increasingly globalised context where boundaries become increasingly blurred 'the discomforts of fragmentation, disruption and "placelessness" have produced nostalgic longings for a secure world and for secure positionings within it' (Duruz 2001, 22). Our socio-historical analysis of cookbooks has identified the centrality of food, food cultures and the representation of these as important antidotes to feelings of placelessness and alienation.

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Culture and Cuisine: A Journey Through the History of Food/Jean-Francois Revel ---thoughtful historic survey documents key turning points in classic French cuisine. Larousse Gastronomique (1938 & 1961 editions preferred for history notes) ---history of French ingredients, recipes, chefs, and cooking methods. The history of Italian food is a fascinating and complicated subject. Not quite sure how much information you need, so we are sending you a variety of sources to begin your project: Traditional favorites/basic overview: Regional cuisine. Italian & Mediterranean culinary history, Clifford A. Wright. History of popular Italian foods. bruchetta & garlic bread. That the British tribes were talented peoples is shown by the brilliant technical and artistic quality of many of the things they made, particularly in metalwork. This suggests that the reason they did not develop, for example, monumental architecture to compare with Greece and Rome was not ignorance, but in part cultural choice. It was when the Roman past became a source of inspiration and a subject of curiosity that the search for the lost Roman history of Britain began, during the sixteenth century. 11. Roman Britain through sites and artefacts Roman Britain is very largely known from archaeology rather than texts; for many aspects of ancient life, documentary sources remain sparse or non-existent.