

## DINING OUT SPECIAL - Cafes and Coffee Shops in the City

(May 20, 2016)



When I die, bring me coffee, and you'll see me rise like Lazarus," said renowned playwright Eduardo De Filippo who, like any good Neapolitan, would never have turned down a cup of coffee. It is this same habit that unites all Italians, incapable of beginning their day without first savoring a morning coffee. But is it possible to find an authentic Italian espresso in New York? Yes it is, and we have chosen a number of cafes and coffee shops that serve a high-quality espresso; respecting Italian traditions by making it exclusively in Italian coffee machines and pairing it with homemade desserts and pastries.

Italians wake up by preparing coffee, spreading the aroma of the most popular drink in the 'Bel Paese' throughout their homes. Yet there is no precise schedule for drinking a good cup of coffee; you can savor an espresso just after lunch, in the middle of the afternoon or after dinner. So, along with Italian flavors, New York coffee shops are also adapting Americans to the customs of Italians—who, even in the "Starbucks capital," often sip their coffee perched at the bar.



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## UPPER EAST SIDE

### Da Capo

1392 Madison Avenue  
(917) 526-8112

[www.dacaponyc.com](http://www.dacaponyc.com) [2]

cuisine traditional ambience rustic

price \$\$

Serving the typical “granita” (a sort of Slushy made from sugar, water and flavorings) that Sicilians normally eat at breakfast, a barista wearing the famous and traditional Sicilian hat called a “coppola” and a long bar to sip your coffee. The island in the south of Italy has inspired Da Capo, a coffee shop opened by the same owner as Zibetto Espresso Bar which has transformed an old bagel shop in Carnegie Hill into a new cafe to drink a coffee or have a snack. At Da Capo, which in Italian means ‘to restart from the beginning’, you can try a unique coffee blend from Bologna in a small and rustic yet elegant setting. Savor an espresso, double espresso or macchiato alongside small Piedmontese desserts such as “Baci di Dama” (“Lady’s Kisses”). Da Capo also offers a selection of Italian sandwiches, the most classic being made with Parma ham and buffalo mozzarella.

### Via Quadronno

25 East 73rd Street  
(212) 650-9880

[www.viaquadronno.com](http://www.viaquadronno.com) [3]

cuisine homemade ambience friendly

price \$\$

There is a small street in the Porta Romana neighborhood of Milan where a young baker named Giuseppe Tusi used to prepare sandwiches in the late 1960s. It is from that street name, via Quadronno, that the story of this cafe began, arriving in Manhattan between the turn of the century. Via Quadronno - which today has two branches in New York - carries a long Italian tradition that can be seen in the menu. Both a sandwich shop and a restaurant, Via Quadronno is the perfect place to relax and sip an authentic cappuccino after visiting one of the Upper East Side’s museums. Amongst its specialties there is also a coffee known as “marocchino”, one of the many varieties of Italian espresso; a small cappuccino with a pinch of cocoa powder.

### Midtown

Zibetto Espresso Bar  
1221 6th Avenue  
(646) 838-6364

[www.zibettoespresso.com](http://www.zibettoespresso.com) [4]

cuisine traditional ambience friendly

price \$\$

Step into this Midtown cafe and you’ll be transported to Italy, thanks to the quality of the coffee, homey atmosphere and typical Italian custom of drinking your coffee at the bar. Zibetto Espresso Bar has expanded and opened a new branch in the heart of Manhattan, upholding its tradition dedicated to four words that in Italian all begin with M: blend (“miscela”), grinder (“macinadosatore”), espresso machine (“macchina espresso”) and the hand of the barista (“mano dell’operatore”). It is on these bases that the coffee shop has built its promise; to brew an original espresso coffee with careful attention, a true blend and the use of typical Italian machinery, but still at a reasonable price. The espresso, cappuccino and macchiato can also be served in the ‘summer’ style - that is with cold milk or with cold foam on the cappuccino. And this is just a small sample of what you can try at the Zibetto Espresso Bar; to truly feel like you’re in Italy you must also savor one of their cream donuts, sfogliatelle, tiramisu or cannoli.

### Macchiato Espresso Bar

141 East 44th Street  
(212) 867-6772

[www.macchiatocafe.com](http://www.macchiatocafe.com) [5]



cuisine traditional ambience modern  
price \$\$

“Single or double shot?” you’ll be asked at the Macchiato Espresso Bar - though it wouldn’t be unusual to also hear it in Italian - when a single shot isn’t quite enough to wake up. The name Macchiato Espresso Bar doesn’t leave much to the imagination; their specialty is an espresso coffee or macchiato, served with a dash of milk. This midtown coffee shop uses a unique blend prepared by baristas of a store called “Macchiato 44” and is best enjoyed alongside a pastry. The atmosphere is deliberately modern though with a touch of the more traditional Italian, such as the long bar where you can stop to order an espresso and drink right there, perched at the counter. The menu of the Macchiato Espresso Bar includes breakfast and also a selection of various sandwiches and salads. So just like in Italy you can enjoy your coffee after a sandwich.

## **FLATIRON**

### **Lavazza (at Eataly)**

200 5th Avenue

(212) 229-2560

[www.eataly.com](http://www.eataly.com) [6]

cuisine typical/modern ambience classic

price \$\$

Inside Eataly, a symbol of Italian excellence, you can’t miss the chance to try one of the oldest and most famous Italian coffees, Lavazza. “The more you down it, the more it lifts you up” (“più lo mandi giù e più ti tira sù”) is the historic slogan of the company, founded in 1895 in Turin by Luigi Lavazza. Today Lavazza has become one of the symbols of Italian espresso abroad.

There’s no better way to start the day or to finish a meal than by savoring an Italian coffee while surrounded by Italian flavors inside their Fifth Avenue store. Yet there is more than just coffee and cappuccinos on the menu here; the Lavazza store also serves sandwiches made with the most authentic Italian ingredients. Amongst these is the Valdostano, prepared with cooked ham and Fontina cheese, and the Tirolese, with smoked ham and Asiago cheese.

### **Caffè Vergnano (at Eataly)**

200 5th Avenue

(212) 229-2560

[www.eataly.com](http://www.eataly.com) [6]

cuisine traditional/piemontese ambience classic

price \$\$

An authentic Italian espresso from 1882; Vergnano coffee has a 134 year long history, beginning in a small store in a little village in Turin, Piedmont. The quality of the grains— chosen from various countries around the world—, the high level of attention to the various phases of preparation, and the use of exclusively Italian coffee machines means you cannot help but find yourself at home in this temple of Italian flavors, in Eataly on Fifth Avenue. Stopping at Vergnano and ordering a coffee is like immersing yourself in an Italian atmosphere and savoring the experience of a true coffee prepared at home, but enjoyed instead at the little counter of the bar. You can choose between espresso coffee or a macchiato with a dash of milk, paired with a home-made dessert, pastry or croissant; an ideal way to start the day or to take a break from work.

## **GRAMECY**

### **Piccolo Cafe**

157 3rd Avenue

(212) 260-1175

[www.piccolocafe.us](http://www.piccolocafe.us) [7]

cuisine typical ambience

cozy price \$



Sample an authentic Italian espresso in a friendly and cozy atmosphere. Its name is Piccolo Cafe and its philosophy is to not only bring a piece of Italy to New York, but also to respect the environment. All of the wood in the cafe is recovered from an ancient Venetian villa and the Italian ambience is accentuated further by a vintage collection that belonged to the grandparents and Italian friends of the owners. The Piccolo Cafe has four branches in Manhattan and in each one you will find a wide selection of Italian products, beginning with good coffee. The coffee grains have come from various parts of the world, including Brazil and South America. They are then toasted in Trieste and turned into a coffee blend. Along with breakfast, the Piccolo Cafe offers typical Italian sandwiches with ham and mozzarella. And if you wish to dine in the restaurant, there is also a vast selection of homemade pasta dishes.

## **GREENWICH VILLAGE**

### **Caffè Reggio**

119 MacDougal Street

(212) 475-9557

[www.caffereggio.com](http://www.caffereggio.com) [8]

cuisine old style

ambience sophisticated

price \$\$

A coffee machine from 1902 displayed in the centre of the room, paintings from the 16th century and a true Italian cappuccino. In the heart of Greenwich Village is one of the oldest cafes in New York, taking its name from Reggio Emilia, the city in Emilia Romagna that is home to the famous Parmesan cheese. Caffè Reggio opened in 1927 and is one of the pioneers of the cappuccino in New York; espresso coffee and milk whipped to foam that Italians drink only at breakfast, accompanied by a croissant. Seated at the small tables of Caffè Reggio, a number of celebrities have sipped a cappuccino, including the actor Al Pacino. Still today the cafe continues to be a regular celebrity hangout, both for New Yorkers and tourists. Though famous for its cappuccino, over the decades Caffè Reggio has expanded its menu to serve not only breakfast but also lunch and dinner. Amongst their many specialties there is, for example, the Canarino Voltaire in honor of the renowned philosopher of the French Enlightenment; a generous breakfast of poached eggs on a bed of rice to start the day, of course accompanied by a good coffee. Due to its calm yet sophisticated atmosphere, Caffè Reggio lends itself particularly well to a day spent relaxing sat at one of the many small tables. Take a break during a frantic day surrounded by Italian art and flavors.

### **Filicori Zecchini**

42 East 46th Street

(212) 867-1888

[www.filicorizecchini.it](http://www.filicorizecchini.it) [9]

cuisine old style

ambience casual

price \$\$

An Italian story which begun in 1919 in Bologna inside a small store founded by Aldo Filicori and Luigi Zecchini. Today it continues to pass on its passion for coffee by selecting its own grains and guaranteeing a quality product based on a strong and decisive aroma. Filicori Zecchini has linked its name to three shops in Manhattan where you can sample an authentic espresso, enhanced by its title of "certified Italian espresso". There are a variety of blends on offer, including the "Gran crema" for a more mild flavor or "46th & Madison", the result of a synergy between Italian and American tastes. Coffee is the perfect drink to start the day, paired with a croissant or one of the many varieties of chocolates found at the bar of Filicori Zecchini: flavored with orange, vanilla, spices or caramel.

## **EAST VILLAGE**

Tarallucci e Vino

163 First Avenue



(212) 388-1190

[www.taralluccievino.com](http://www.taralluccievino.com) [10]

cuisine homemade

ambience casual

price \$\$

Inspired by the Italian saying “tutto finisce a tarallucci e vino” (“it all ends with biscuits and wine”), or that in the end everything will be fine, Tarallucci e Vino invites you to sip a good glass of wine accompanied by tarallucci, a small flour-based item resembling a biscuit, though savory. Founded by two Italians, Luca di Pietro from Abruzzo and Lorenzo Baricca from Emilia Romagna, Tarallucci e Vino has four branches in Manhattan with a warm atmosphere typical of Italian cafes and small restaurants. Notably, in their East Village store you can try a true Italian breakfast, which of course must begin

with a good coffee. The philosophy of the cafe is to bring a slice of Italy to New York with a close attention to high quality and authentic ingredients. Homemade pastries like croissants or donuts filled with cream or chocolate can accompany a good coffee.

### **Veniero’s Pastry**

342 East 11th Street

(212) 674-7070

[www.venierospastry.com](http://www.venierospastry.com) [11]

cuisine typical

ambience classic

price \$\$

They began serving coffee at the end of the 19th century and after a while also started baking biscotti. This is a story of emigration, the values of the Italian family and the memories of the tradition behind Veniero’s bakery, one of the oldest in New York, opened as far back as 1894 by Antonio Veniero. Emigrated from a small village on the Sorrento coast, Veniero began his business with coffee and biscotti. He made it through the Great Depression of the 20s, and by the 60s he had expanded to become one of the most renowned Italian bakeries in New York. In a classic environment with painted ceilings and Venetian decoration, Veniero’s is the ideal place to enjoy a slice of cake accompanied by a good coffee. Cannoli, sfogliatelle, biscotti and even the great cheesecake: at Veniero’s everyone can pair a coffee with their favorite dessert.

## **LITTLE ITALY**

### **Ferrara Bakery & Cafe**

195 Grand Street

(212) 226-6150

[www.ferraranyc.com](http://www.ferraranyc.com) [12]

cuisine traditional

ambience homey

price \$\$

This spot was established in 1892 with the idea of creating a place where lovers of the Italian opera could go after a performance, to relax and play cards while drinking a coffee accompanied by biscotti or dessert. Since then the Ferrara Bakery, located in the heart of Little Italy, has passed through five generations, expanding its menu to include over 200 specialties of traditional Italian pastries. Managed by the Lepore family, this warm and homey cafe also serves good coffee to accompany the traditional Neapolitan and Sicilian desserts. For those who prefer a weaker coffee, the Ferrara Bakery offers a cappuccino and macchiato— espresso coffee with a dash of milk.

## **BROOKLYN**

### **Fabbrica Restaurant & Bar**

44 N 6th Street

(718) 218-7045



[www.fabbricanyc.com](http://www.fabbricanyc.com) [13]

cuisine innovative

ambience modern/industrial

price \$\$

Italian cuisine revisited with a modern touch, a space decorated with a large mural by a Brooklyn artist and a name to remember the factories of Williamsburg. On the waterfront of Williamsburg you will find Fabbrica, an Italian restaurant with a distinctly Italian-style menu: antipasto, primo (starter), secondo (main) and a good coffee to finish. The atmosphere is elegant as light filters in through the large windows; Fabbrica is the perfect spot to stop and savor Italian flavors and to sip an authentic Italian espresso. Order a coffee to conclude your dinner or to start the day, pairing it with one of the many desserts prepared skillfully by the chef. Amongst these, the tiramisu is a standout item; a dessert prepared by soaking biscuits in coffee and covering them with a cream made from mascarpone, eggs and sugar.

### **A-Roma Bakery Cafe**

475 Grand Street

(718) 388-8182

[www.aromabakerycafebk.com](http://www.aromabakerycafebk.com) [14]

cuisine italian & american ambience casual

price \$

A small neighborhood cafe with a huge variety of homemade pastries, amongst which are some incredible donuts—soft dough, circular-shaped pastry covered in sugar. Yet these are only one of the specialties at the A-Roma Bakery Cafe, located in Williamsburg and popular for its breakfasts. There is a distinct Italian tone in the choice of drinks, beginning with the espresso coffee, macchiato and cappuccino along with their more refreshing versions, such as cold milk and iced coffee. These drinks accompany a number of pastries that vary from meringues to tiramisu, from filled croissants to cannoli with ricotta and cream. Though the Italian touch is somewhat small, it is paired with an American tradition; at the A-Roma Bakery you can also order a bagel with cream cheese and salmon.

## **THE BRONX**

### **De Lillo Cafe & Pastry Shop**

610 East 187 Street

(718) 367-8198

[www.delillopastryshop.com](http://www.delillopastryshop.com) [15]

cuisine traditional

ambience homey

price \$

They left Calabria in search of the American Dream. It was 1925 when the two brothers, Rocco and Joe De Lillo emigrated to seek their fortune in America and to bring a piece of Italy to New York. There is well over a century of history behind the De Lillo bakery in the Bronx, a place where you can enjoy a true espresso coffee. Today the De Lillo bakery evokes a homey Italian atmosphere inside a large space, where cakes are displayed on the counter. Sicilian cannoli, Neapolitan baba and chocolate and cream desserts perfectly complement an authentic Italian coffee prepared with care and love. Just a stone's throw from Arthur Avenue, this street in the Bronx has long since become another Little Italy. The De Lillo bakery is the expression of that community, a spokesperson for the authentic flavors of Italy.

## **STATEN ISLAND**

### **Pasticceria Bruno**

676 Forest Avenue

(718) 448-0993

[www.pasticceriabruno.com](http://www.pasticceriabruno.com) [16]

cuisine homemade ambience classic

price \$\$



Bruno Pasticceria opened in 1973 aiming to bring Italian excellence to New York. In 2008, they cut the ribbon on their shop in Staten Island, where Italian chefs delight our taste buds from breakfast until lunch and dinner. Amongst the specialties of the bakery, you cannot miss Italy's most popular drink—espresso coffee prepared with careful attention to quality and using exclusively Italian coffee machines. Espresso, macchiato and even cap-puccino can be sampled at Pasticceria Bruno, alongside a slice of cake, biscotti or perhaps the house specialty named “Torta del secolo” (“Cake of the Century”), a chocolate mousse with a layer of pears and hazelnuts.

**Source URL:** <http://iltaly.org/magazine/article/dining-out-special-cafes-and-coffee-shops-in-city>

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