

# BREAKING NEWS



## GIORGIA MELONI: ITALY'S FIRST FEMALE PRIME MINISTER

## EASTER TRADITIONS



## FAKE MEAT?



# EASTER TRADITIONS

## What or who makes traditions important?

Talking about the importance of traditions means giving a particular value to the heritage of each of us. The importance of preserving traditions is evident as they make it possible for the world to be diverse and interesting, waiting to be discovered. Strengthening the traditions we love most also means protecting other traditions and **creating a world where coexistence between multiple cultures prevails.**

## But what relationship do traditions have with tourism?

Travel lovers also enjoy discovering the identity and traditions of the place they are exploring, which is why we can say that cultural tourism is a phenomenon in constant growth, a phenomenon whose axis is tradition. The traveler does not want to go anywhere but to a land full of traditions, i.e. rich from a cultural point of view. In other words, **traditions make a certain place unique and special.**



The most important traditions in Caltanissetta are undoubtedly the **Holy Week** celebrations including the procession of the **Real Maestranza** and the **Holy Thursday** procession of the **Vare**. The procession of the Real Maestranza, which takes place on **Holy Wednesday**, was declared 'royal' in 1806 at the request of Ferdinand IV of Bourbon who, during a visit to the city, impressed by the magnificence of the procession, granted it the title 'Real Maestranza'. Historical sources on the Wednesday afternoon procession of the **Varicedde** date back to the early twentieth century. In **1923** some families offered a contribution for the creation of 19 sculptural groups that were going to swell the original nucleus formed by 10 Varicedde. The origin of the Holy Thursday procession is older.





The celebration of the Mysteries has been holding in Caltanissetta **since the 18th century**. Originally there were only five *Vare*, but over time they grew to fourteen in the second half of the 19th century, when the **Zolfatari** (sulphur miners) commissioned a new monumental group, the *Veronica*, as an act of grace for having survived an explosion of *grisù* (firedamp) inside Gessolungo mine.



According to some studies, the "Mysteries" are linked to the **ascetic-penitential rites of medieval times**. Later introduced in Italy and Spain, they took the form of theatrical dramatization, replaced over time by groups of statues. **How and when do the Holy Week celebrations start in Caltanissetta?** In Caltanissetta, the Holy Week celebrations begin in the afternoon of Palm Sunday with the procession following downtown the **statue of Jesus of Nazareth**, which is placed on a boat decorated with flowers.

The sacred representations, called **Scinnenze**, take place on Monday and on Tuesday before Easter. From Wednesday we get to the heart of the festival with the solemn and famous procession of the Real Maestranza, which has been taking place **since 1500**. In the morning the representatives of all the oldest guilds of local artisans, led by their captain, move in procession with flags of mourning from his headquarters to the cathedral, where a rite of regeneration and redemption takes place. The procession is accompanied by the clergy through the streets of the city center. At sunset of the same day the procession of the *Varicedde* begins with **19 small simulacra** that recall those on Holy Thursday. On Thursday evening, the celebration of the Mysteries is the fulcrum and the most spectacular moment of the Holy Week celebrations in Caltanissetta.



Starting at 8:00 p.m, **sixteen Vare**, imposing groups mostly made of papier-mâché, parade through the streets of the city centre until late at night. The sculptural groups were almost all created by the artists **Francesco** and his son **Vincenzo Biangardi**, who made them with head and feet in papier-mâché, hands and wooden skeleton and the remainder of the body covered with *olona* (canvas) and with a layer of plaster mixed with glue which, well scraped and colored, perfectly imitates a wood sculpture but **very light**, just to be carried in procession.



The 16 Vare represent the various moments of the **Passion of Christ**: The Last Supper, The Prayer in the Garden, The Capture of Jesus, The Sanhedrin, The Flagellation, The Ecce Homo; The Condemnation of Jesus; The First Fall, The Cyrenean, The Veronica; The Crucifixion, The Deposition, The Pity, The Transfer, The Sacred Urn and Our Lady of Sorrows. Each Vara is **carried by members of the class to which it belongs** and there is also a marching band that accompanies the group. The next day, Good Friday, the procession of the "**Lord of the City**" or "**Black Christ**" (**Cristu Nivuru**) takes place.

The simulacrum is the object of a strong devotion of the faithful for its miraculous powers. Tradition tells that in the 14th century the black Christ was found by two Fogliamari (gatherers of wild herbs) **inside a cave near Caltanissetta**, between two lighted candles. Christ was the patron of the city until 1625, when Caltanissetta was dedicated to the Archangel Michael, in gratitude for having been saved from the plague.



In the **Good Friday** procession, according to the ancient rite, the "Maestranza dei Fogliamari", in a purple tunic trimmed with gold, carries the Lord of the City on their shoulders, advancing barefoot and singing the praises of Christ of the least.

They are funeral laments with a melodic musical system, the so-called Ladata or Lamintanza, i.e. a responsorial song in which the soloist's voice alternates with that of the choir, narrating the **passion and death of Christ**. The Real Maestranza also participates in the procession. The crowd that follows is enormous, many are the people who make "the Journey" following the procession, barefoot from the very beginning, **to ask for a favour from the Crucifix or to thank him for a favour received**. Those who do not follow the procession gather in prayer as it passes.



The Black Christ perhaps has a lower artistic value than the Vare of Holy Thursday, but the procession is experienced by the **Nisseni** (inhabitants of Caltanissetta) with such intensity as to transmit strong emotions even to tourists who, by participating in the rites of the Holy Week in Caltanissetta, **will be able to say that they have contributed to the creation of a real moving work of art**.



# FAKE MEAT?

In recent months, the Italian government has presented a **bill to ban all kinds of synthetic meat**. Since the very first days of taking office, the new government has launched into a sort of war against synthetic meat.

The Italian organization Coldiretti, the Italian organization for Italian farmers and breeders, has supported this vision. From the point of view of the Italian Farmers Community this kind of "New Meat" would be harmful for health, harmful for the environment, "would despise the extraordinary bond that unites food and nature" and it "would be produced in bioreactors from runaway cells"... but there is a problem...

## **Synthetic meat do not exist.**

The main problem is that, especially cow farms (But any type of intensive farming), produce a large amount of greenhouse gases, so the scientists



community is searching for a greener option. Some alternatives are already available, but they have nothing synthetic.

The so-called "**vegetable meat**" or "**fake meat**" is based on the processing of ingredients such as wheat, coconut oil, potatoes and other vegetables with the aim of making them have the texture and appearance of real meat.

Other options may be meats created in vitro. Using cells taken from live animals, scientists in laboratories can make the cells live and reproduce as if they were still in their original organism. There is very little meat production in vitro, so bioreactors are used to create a large amount of it.



**So it is not synthetic.** If we talk about something synthetic, we assume that we start from scratch to create something that looks like meat from processes where chemical compounds and reactions are used.

Some Companies are trying to create synthetic meat, but the results are too unconvincing so far because these methods requires too much electricity and **it is very different**, for texture and taste, from the real meat.



But even if synthetic meat existed, it would already be made illegal because, like any new product introduced into the European market (Novel Food), it must be brought under control. So when this thing becomes real the **Italian bill will no longer have value** because it is subject to a European law.

Why does the Italian government use wrong terms to talk about Synthetic meat?





# GIORGIA MELONI: ITALY'S FIRST FEMALE PRIME MINISTER



Who's Giorgia Meloni? She is Italy's **first female prime minister**. Her victory represents a historic moment in Italian politics, as she leads a coalition that includes the far-right Brothers of Italy and the anti-immigration party, Lega.

Meloni, 44, has been active in politics **since her teenage years** when she joined a youth branch of the neo-fascist party, the Italian Social Movement. Since then, she has moved to **the right of the political spectrum**, positioning herself as a defender of Christian values, traditional family values, and the Italian identity. What did she promise in her program? In her campaign leading up to the election, **Meloni promised to crack down on illegal immigration, reduce taxes and combat what she sees as a growing threat of Islamic extremism in Italy.**

She has also **promised to increase funding for the Italian military**, which she believes should play a stronger role in the defense of the country's borders.

Despite Meloni's controversial political views, her election has been welcomed by many as a **milestone for Italian democracy**. Some have called her victory a rejection of career politicians and a **sign that Italian people are ready for change.**





However, others have criticized Meloni's coalition **for their divisive and xenophobic rhetoric**, arguing that they represent a threat to Italy's multicultural society. Many fear that her election may further embolden far-right elements in Italian society and contribute to an **increase in racism and intolerance**.



As Italy's first female prime minister, **she faces a number of challenges**, including the ongoing **economic crisis** in Italy, rising unemployment and social unrest. Nevertheless, she has pledged to work tirelessly to improve the lives of all Italians and to lead the country with honesty and integrity.

Obviously, Giorgia Meloni's election as Italy's first female prime minister **is a significant moment in Italian politics**, but what direction will her leadership take? While some see her as a breath of fresh air in a stagnant political system, **others fear that her policies could further divide an already fractured society**. Only time will tell whether Meloni's leadership will bring about positive change or further turmoil in Italy.

