

BRAVA ITALIA “The Proud Tradition”

A new, three-part series, **BRAVA ITALIA**, salutes the Italian zest for life. Revealing how Italians make an art out of everyday living, “**The Proud Tradition**,” the first program in the series, paints a portrait of a country that honors pride of place, family history and celebrations, ritual, local crafts, foods and wine.

The Italian people possess a rare sense of style and passion that spring from the unusual diversity of cultures -- Greek, Etruscan, Roman, Phoenician, Moorish and early Christian -- that have taken root in their homeland over time. What they have seen and experienced over millennia has made them deeply confident about their history, their cultural values and their own identities. Italians have learned, from generation to generation, how to make ordinary life quite extraordinary.

BRAVA ITALIA “The Proud Tradition” takes a lingering look at how Italians connect with the world around them, in the present and in the past. Director/producer/screenwriter Francis Ford Coppola reminisces about family members several generations back who once roamed Basilicata, and discusses the importance of preserving the region and its old traditions. Italy’s natural landscape is renowned sculptor Luciano Zaroni’s muse. “I leave the house and go up into the mountains,” he reveals, “I find a plant that I like and fix it in my head.” A blacksmith’s son, Zaroni shapes wrought iron into exquisite metal trees—one of an olive tree was even purchased by computer tycoon Bill Gates. Meet fisherman Francesco Adragna, who remembers the day he pulled an ancient statue up out of his nets: “It came out face upwards...the first thing we saw was the expression. We all felt an indescribable emotion.” Clearly conveying the pride the locals possess, these stories offer a slice of Italian life.

From the mountains of Trentino, down along the Mediterranean coast, take in the cosmopolitan dynamism and international flair of Naples and Rome. Visit the small towns of Gubbio and Grado where centuries’ old street festivals and religious processions are still re-enacted with tradition and flourish. Capturing the rhythms of daily Italian life on the ground and from the skies, **BRAVA ITALIA** features narration by actor Paul Sorvino and a rich regional soundtrack. “**The Proud Tradition**” premieres nationwide December 2008 on public television (check local listings). Look out for part two, “The Beautiful Life,” and part three, “The Eternal Country,” in 2009.

A WLIW New York Production. Executive Producer: Roy A Hammond.
Producer/Writer/Editor: Sam Toperoff. Presented nationally by WLIW New York. ST and CC.

