

University of Florida students discover Loison confections

On June 15th, a group of young students traveling through Italy made a stop in the Vicenza area to visit Pasticceria Loison. They were all delighted to taste real Panettone, or "Christmas Bread", as they called it

On June 15th, students from the **University of Florida** (in collaboration with the University of Palermo) paid an intense and educational visit to Loison's headquarters. The field trip was part of the university's **Study Abroad Program**, now in its seventh year. The theme this year was "**Food Production to Consumption**", a 19-day technical course in Italy for a group of U.S. students visiting the most representative companies of the food industry. The goal of the program was for students to learn and understand the value and the technologies behind locally-made Italian products.

Prof. Sims (an expert in sensory analysis) and his wife met with **Riccardo Lo Bianco**, Ph.D. of the Department of Agricultural and Forest Sciences, University of Palermo. They accompanied the 20-year-old students who came from different fields, such as food science, nutrition and dietetics, marketing, economics and tourism. During their 19-day trip, they all had the opportunity to visit wineries, sausage factories, oil mills, dairies, vinegar makers, pasta makers and more, located in Sicily, Tuscany, Emilia and Veneto.

While in Vicenza, they stopped at **Pasticceria Loison**, where they had the opportunity to learn about an excellent example of entrepreneurship based on traditional local productions. After listening to **Dario Loison**'s clear and lively lecture on the production processes, including an explanation of the long phases of sourdough making, the students moved on to the tasting. This consisted of not only traditional products, but also the latest innovative creations. Next to Panettone-based **Macarons** and Panettone **Pops**, the visitors were introduced to the 2015 newest addition, namely **Chamomile Panettone**. The amazed and delighted faces of the students were worth a thousand words. Discovering the true taste of the "**Christmas bread**", as they called it, was a happy surprise. They were especially intrigued by the aromatic fragrance of the confections, what with their mellow flavor and enveloping softness.

The students are now off to the last destinations of their Italian field trip that will end on June 25th, when they are scheduled to return to Florida. We are certain that they will always carry with them the real taste of artisanal Italian products.

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