

Stories

of

Jah Lemon

part fourteen

**Citrus and Biscotti**

Celebrating Citrus in Italy

Natty Mark Samuels

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# Dedication

to

**Radio Djamar and Djamar Records  
Italy**

and the

**Bar Cafe London  
Porto Viro, Italy**

in recognition of their support for the Stories of Jah Lemon  
encouraging daily intake of citrus

## Shrines of The Yellow Gem

Got to go back,  
To the one that knows.

Listen to the voice of time,  
Letting the words flow.

Going back to Calabria:  
He knows how the bergamot grows.

Yes, back to Calabria. Where else can she go, with the desire to encounter bergamot? Got to go to that area in southern Italy, which produces ninety per cent of the world's supply of the fruit. In the days of sunshine, on foot and by car, Cindy Citrus will go between Villa S.Giovanni and Gioiosa Jonica, on her quest for *Citrus bergamia*.

The Citrus Pilgrimage often includes a pathway to passion, as it does in Calabria. Passion of old men and their sons, enthused daily with the mantra of tradition and quality. Her Calabrain walk will be a homage to the elders and a salute to inter-generational interaction.

As well as a homage and salute, her walk will also be a tribute: tribute to the medicinal qualities. In its inventory of healing possibilities, is the anti-bacterial one; against mouth ulcers, herpes and so on. If the fruit could speak, like a trusted old friend, it would say "For your cold sores, have no fear: Bergamot is here."

After time in the groves, time to sample the results. So much to choose from! From the green and yellow fields to the white-covered tables. Juice flavouring in yogurt; with mint as a sorbet; a "syrup to add to Prosecco"; alongside chocolate in scones; with oysters and mushrooms in a salad; placed with rosemary in a tart; or with avocado in a dish of smoked salmon. In perfume, in Earl Grey tea. What will it be Cindy Citrus?

Got to go back,  
Shrines of the Yellow Gem.

Listen to the ageing sage,  
Under a citrus totem.

Going back to Calabria:  
He knows the gems of the diadem.

## **Singers of Sea and Citrus**

### **First Voice**

Bring me prawns and scallops,  
Mussels and squid.

### **Voices**

Let there be Insalata Di Mare,  
Embellished by lemon juice.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Voice**

Bring me parsley and chives,  
Olive oil and black pepper.

### **Voices**

Let there be Insalata Di Mare,  
Embellished by lemon juice.

## **The Citrus Factor**

Isn't it good to know that when making Maionese, that citrus is the determining feature. You put in your egg yolks, olive oil, salt and black pepper, but when it comes to "the consistency" and thickness, *citrus limon* is the determining factor.

## **Citrus and Biscotti**

There's been recipes for it,  
Since the 13th century.  
Once of "hazelnut and aniseed"  
Now of options and citrus:  
Come let us eat biscotti.

Lemons from Calabria,  
Sicily and Amalfi.  
Sometimes with oranges,  
Cherries and almonds:  
Come let us eat biscotti.

We are blest you and I,  
By the gifts from Italy.  
Used in desserts and coffee,  
For wine and for juice:  
Come let us eat biscotti.

## **Streets of Vitamin C**

One of the citrus festivities Jah Lemon would like to attend, is the one in Ivrea, in Italy. Following a medieval tradition of a victory of the common man over a local tyrant, this conflict is re-enacted by what is said to be Italy's biggest food fight – The Battle of Oranges. Revellers launch these citrus missiles at each other, leaving the street awash with peel, pulp and juice. He imagines taking a solitary, early morning stroll through the town, when the three day battle is over, engrossed in the aftermath of a citrus reverie. The smell of orange must linger for a day or two, as he goes walking through the Streets of Vitamin C.

## Lemon Gingerbread and Limencello

From France to Italy, to Monterosso al Mare in May: another village by the Mediterranean Sea. She'll take the walk of "8,000 lemon-scented steps", then to the Piazza Garibaldi in the evening, for the giving of awards for citrus brilliance. The Yellow Peel Pilgrim has heard that they make lemon gingerbread too!

A month off the road, then to Naples in July - to Massa Lubrense, on the Amalfi coast. She writes in her notebook...

Going to Massa Lubrense,  
Village near Sorrento.  
To a homage to lemon,  
Two days of heaven:  
Time to try Limencello.

Going to Massa Lubrense,  
Village near Postiano.  
To a tribute to citrus,  
Fructus Benedictus:  
Time to try Femminello.

From Massa Lubrense to Chula Vista....

## The Blessings of Calabria

Knowing that everyone wants to stop cancer and heart disease, Cindy Citrus thinks it makes sense to partake of what will stop inflammation: so let there be citron. One of the four original ancestors of the *Rutaceae* family, citron gave us the gift of lemon.

She can think of no better way of eating this fruit, than Citron Fruit Rice. Lovely to watch the video of the woman making it; ingredients such as peanuts, black pepper, curry leaves, tumeric powder, green chilli and coriander leaves: further embellished with the juice of the citron.

To many people, citron means Calabria. At the meeting of air; cold from the mountains, warm from the sea, there is generated a perfect climate for citron cultivation. Representatives of the global Orthodox Jewish communities, travel annually to this region in Italy, to choose this fruit and have it transported back, as it is an essential item in Sukkot, the Feast of the Tabernacles. On a video-watching morning, she saw the keeping of tradition, the care of selection: the symbiotic relationship between these international Hasidic congregations and the farmers of Calabria.

As part of the Calabrian part of her Citrus Pilgrimage, she must visit the Citron Museum, in Santa Maria del Cedro, one of the major citrus towns in the region; cedro is the Italian for citron. It will be her first visit to a museum dedicated to it. How many others are there? And while in Calabria, she must sample the regional goodies. Not one for liquers, but she'll have to take a sip or two of the citron version. There's also a candy sweet made from the fruit. One she's really looking forward to, is a mix of citron slices and sweet grapes, baked in citrus leaves. The Blessings of Calabria.

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