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## Fast food, slow food and Botteghe storiche – How the changing face of Rome’s culinary traditions have influenced nutrition, health and cultural heritage

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Although still relatively low as compared to the US, Italy’s obesity rates and diet-related health problems are rising. Concurrent with this has been an increase in fast food restaurants and an influx of Westernized eating and work habits. Italy in general and Rome in particular, has a long and fascinating food history. Italy is the birthplace of the Slow Food movement (established in response to the opening of McDonald’s in Rome in 1986); it is also where artisanal foods and culinary traditions are part of the fabric of everyday life. Long before food was categorized as “fast” or “slow,” Rome’s cobblestone streets were lined with *Botteghe Storiche* -public places in ancient Rome where food was sold and Romans could eat, drink or sleep and hear news of the day. These shops are fast-disappearing, but there is a movement to preserve them. Today, an estimated 120 sites have obtained the title of *Bottegastorica* from the municipality of Rome. In their 2003 article “Return to traditional values? A case study of Slow Food” Jones and colleagues conclude that, “while slow food provides a valuable contrast to the seemingly all powerful fast food industry it seems unlikely to be able to promote widespread changes in the modern world’s eating habits.” In this presentation, we reexamine this conclusion by exploring Rome’s culinary traditions and how its food preparation methods, eating habits and cultural heritage have both shaped and been challenged by the passage of time.

### Biography

Elena T Carbone is a health education/nutrition communications researcher. Her mixed methods work with communities integrates behavioral interventions to promote health and prevent complications related to obesity, diabetes and cancer. She is an Associate Professor/Graduate Program Director of Nutrition and Founding Director of the Community-Engaged Research Program at UMass Amherst. She is a Registered Dietitian, a Gustolab Institute Visiting Professor and Editorial Board Member of several journals. She has made over 100 presentations nationally/internationally and authored over 30 peer-reviewed publications. She has received multiple awards for her contributions to the field of nutrition, most recently from Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior.

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