



Grand Tour: Italy's food industry tours Europe under the banner of 150 years of national unity

Together with Unioncamere and Assocamerestero, Autogrill is promoting Italian food and wine in over 600 points of sale in its European network.

- 14 million contacts (estimated). Autogrill's international network enables small size, quality industries to enjoy visibility; the promotion is involving 180 locations along motorways, in airports and railways stations.
- In 2010, the food sector accounted for around 4% (€50 billion) of Italy's GNP.
- Despite the financial crisis, Italian food exports in the first six months del 2011 continued to grow (10.5%).

Roma, 2 November 2011 – "Grand Tour. Italian taste in Europe", an initiative by Autogrill, Unioncamere and Assocamerestero to bring genuine Italian quality products to European consumers was presented today at the offices of the Foreign Press Association in Rome. The initiative is designed to promote "Good Food for Europe" in opposition to the proliferation of "Italian-sounding" products (international food pirating is worth €52m in sales) and has been recognized by the organization supervising the 150th Italian unity anniversary celebrations, as well as having the support of the EU.

Till 11 December, 600 Autogrill points of sale in six European countries - France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland and Austria – are offering various menus featuring recipes based on quality products typical of the three Italian regions (Campania, Emilia Romagna and Piemonte) chosen as Italian food ambassadors. Some of the ingredients in the featured recipes will be available in the same points of sale, where there will also be free info materials on products and the places they come from. The project will gradually involve other parts of Italy, thus taking the country's finest products, on its 150 years of unity, into the heart of Europe.

"This partnership between the various organizations involved in the initiative," said **Unioncamere president Ferruccio Dardanello**, "grew out of a desire to create a virtuous model of public-private collaboration capable of exploiting the skills, resources and best practices of its members to boost domestic and cross-border trade throughout Europe".

This "Grand Tour" will be travelling to over 600 Autogrill points of sale across more than 180 locations, including 130 on motorways, six in airports, 19 in railway stations and 16 in high street and shopping centres. The initiative is expected to reach around 14 million European travellers.

"Our sector is an important economic indicator," said **Autogrill CEO Gianmario Tondato Da Ruos**, "because growth and economic wellbeing depend vitally on people and goods being mobile. When traffic levels drop, it's nearly always a bad sign for the economy. In the European countries involved in this initiative, despite the current crisis, we're seeing a positive trend in traffic in the airport (especially in The Netherlands, Belgium and Switzerland) and railway station channels, whereas the motorway channel is experiencing a contraction in traffic, except in Belgium, where there have been signs of recovery in the last few months".

Catering is proving to be an important new channel of development for Italian food products, which are suffering persistent stagnation in terms of domestic consumption. Autogrill is at the end of the process – the acid test for any





food product – and brings its own added value to such production. Small and medium sized enterprises find these points of sales an exceptional means of promotion.

Purchasing becomes a special experience and then a habit, because Autogrill operates from a platform that engages with and informs consumers via their purchasing and enjoyment of products.

Autogrill has seen that consumers faced with the economic crisis end up acting rather like Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde: on one hand they're very careful about health issues, shopping around for functional food and reasonable prices, and on the other hand they search for food that brings emotionally significant new experience. Consumers prefer fast-service or take-away formulas but can't do without the occasional, genuine gastronomic experience featuring traditional and local dishes. Demanding, well informed and open to global trends that are widening people's choice of foods, but also focussed on value for money, on rational management of their time and resources: these are the defining characteristics of consumers on the move in Europe today.

Such attitudes on the part of the consumer perhaps explain why Italian food exports continued to grow (10.5%) in the first half of 2011 despite the economic and financial crisis. The Italian food industry as a whole exported goods worth €27.7 billion in 2010 (nearly 7% of Italy's total exports) thanks above all to processed products (5.3%). The main export markets are France, Germany and the UK.

Italy boasts one of the world's most valuable certified food industries, having some 740 products covered by official European Union Protected Denomination of Origin (PDO) or Protected Geographic Indication (PGI) status (229 PDO/PGI foods and 511 wines), not to mention over 4,600 officially recorded local specialities.

The products that the Grand Tour will take around Europe come from over 30 small or medium size, quality-oriented companies (often artisan based), the vital, connective tissue of the Italian economy. These include, to name but two, Fabbrica della Pasta di Gragnano (Naples), a maker of high quality pasta in business since the beginning of the last century under the guidance of successive generations of the Moccia family (the company currently produces around 10,000 kg a day, with over 30 employees, and exports worldwide, from Brazil to Australia and Japan), and the equally emblematic Piemonte-based Perla, dairy producers for over half a century who now have 40 employees and sell in 30 countries worldwide.

"The partnership with Autogrill in Europe," said **Parma Alimentare CEO Cesare Azzali**, "is a source of great satisfaction for us. The catering channel is an excellent opportunity to raise awareness of high quality "made in Parma" products and at the same time boost sales. European markets continue to be vitally important outlets for Parma companies, with exports up 3.5% in 1st quarter 2011 (source: ISTAT)."

Our country can boast the world's most effective control systems for guaranteeing food safety. The regularity rate in controls, in fact, is around 99% across the various food industries. Not surprisingly in this context, Italian food businesses are champions of sustainable development: Italy is the world's biggest exporter of bio products (worth around €900m) and in the last two years 1 company out of 4 has invested in low environmental impact products.

"Grand Tour. Italian Taste in Europe": the menu

The Grand Tour Menu will be offered in table-service and self-service restaurants, snack bars and cafes and will include a range of specialities, from selections of Italian cheeses to cured meats from the Emilia region (PDO Toma Piemontese, PDO Parmigiano-Reggiano or PDO Prosciutto di Parma), first courses based on pasta di Gragnano and fresh Emilia egg pasta (with fillings), Limoncello desserts, Benevento biscuits, Avellino nougat or Caffè Gourmand (with Gianduiotto or Cuneese); not to mention local snacks like the Piadina Romagnola or Piemonte salami or Prosciutto di Parma baguettes, and quality dressings like Aceto Balsamico di Modena (vinegar) or PDO





extravergine olive oil. Customers will not only be able to choose recipes from the menu but also buy local products from the three regions featured in Autogrill's food stores.

Autogrill - is the world's biggest provider of food&beverage and retail services for travellers. It's active in 35 countries and has around 62,500 employees working in over 5,300 points of sale spread across more than 1,200 locations in airports, on motorways, in railway stations, high streets, shopping centres, trade fairs and cultural facilities. The Group operates in two sectors: Food & Beverage and Travel Retail & Duty-Free. F&b is the Group's traditional business, which is carried on mainly in Europe and North America, while Travel Retail is concentrated mostly in Europe but with significant operations also in the Middle East, the Americas and Asia. The Company has a portfolio of over 350 house and licensed brands, a calibrated mix of global and local labels that enable it to effectively meet changing market and consumer demands and be attractive to landlords and clients as a global provider of services for travellers.

Unioncamere - Founded in 1901, the Italian Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Trade and Agriculture is a public agency whose task is to serve and represent the general interests of Italian Chambers of Commerce and other related organizations. Unioncamere promotes, develops and operates services and activities for 105 Chambers of Commerce and 19 regional Unions that serve all business categories. Specifically, it operates in the fields of market regulation and transparency, support for internationalization and promotion/safeguarding of "made in Italy" production, research and technology/innovation transfer, monitoring of local economies, promotion of management training and simplification of business processes.

Assocamerestero - The Association of Italian Chambers of Commerce Abroad (ICCA) supports Chamber of Commerce activities and promotes them via various Italian and international organizations and employer associations. ICCAs are associations of business and professional people (Italian and local) recognized by the Italian government. They currently form a network of 75 associations in 50 countries, with 140 offices and over 24,000 members. ICCAs organize initiatives that help Italian businesses gain access to foreign markets, including the promotion of new business contacts, personalized assistance for enterprises and information and advertising campaigns.

