



Calabria Food Fest 2025: Southern Italy's Untold Story Comes to Life Through Flavor, Heritage & Global Influence

NY, UNITED STATES, July 24, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- This summer, Calabria, the sun-drenched region at the toe of Italy's boot, captivated the world with the debut of [Calabria Food Fest](#) (CFF) — a pioneering, week-long celebration that brought together food, culture, wellness, and storytelling in one of Italy's most untouched and emotionally resonant regions. Held from June 15 to 22, the festival transformed the Montagne del Sole area into a global stage for gastronomic exploration and cultural reconnection.

Organized by Sognare Insieme Viaggi and GAL Serre Calabresi under the national Le Montagne del Sole project — with institutional support from the Italian Ministry of Tourism, Italea Program, the Region of Calabria, Calabria Film Commission, ARSAC, and more — the event was elevated by a strategic influencer marketing partnership with Gotham Group Agency, the New York-based creative firm led by Daniel Leira.

From Dolce Vita Dreamers to Ancestral Storytellers

What began as a glamorous escape turned into something far more intimate. More than 40 international creators — including actors, chefs, journalists, and travel tastemakers — traveled to Calabria lured by the promise of la dolce vita. What they discovered instead was a raw and deeply emotional journey: reconnecting with ancestral roots, engaging with local traditions, and uncovering the spiritual power of food and place.

From yoga at sunrise on the Ionian coast to pasta-making workshops with local nonnas, from fire-lit village feasts to barefoot wine tastings under ancient olive trees, the CFF experience became a love letter to a Calabria most travelers never see. The event closed with a dazzling red carpet gala at the Castle of Squillace, generating over 30 million online impressions and widespread media interest across the U.S., Canada, and Latin America.

"Bringing creators here gave Calabria modern eyes and authentic voices," said Daniel Leira, CEO of Gotham Group Agency and Talent Manager for CFF. "Through our partnership, we designed a storytelling experience where every post, video, and reel wasn't just content — it was cultural ambassadorship."

A Cuisine Rooted in Fire, Sea & Greek Soul

Unlike the pasta-and-pesto image many associate with Italian food, Calabria's cuisine tells a bolder, older story — one shaped by its Greek heritage, volcanic soil, and rugged coastline. Guests at CFF tasted 'nduja, the region's famous spicy spreadable salami; morzello, a rich offal stew; fileja pasta served with red onion and pecorino; and desserts flavored with Calabrian licorice and bergamot citrus, a fruit native to the region. These flavors reflected not just regional pride, but a culinary identity that predates the Roman Empire.

"Calabria doesn't copy anyone. It reveals itself," said Anthony Macrì, Creative Director of CFF.

"Its cuisine is fierce, honest, and alive with ancestral memory."

Food as a Bridge Between Italy and Its Diaspora Anchoring the festival's deeper mission was a partnership with the Italea Program, a project by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs designed to encourage Italian descendants abroad to rediscover their heritage. In two powerful sessions led by Giovanni Maria De Vita, head of Italea, international guests reflected on how food, land, and language can become powerful connectors across generations.

"In Calabria, a meal isn't just nourishment — it's identity. It's history," said De Vita. "Through gastronomy, we build bridges back to our roots."

A Model for Modern Destination Marketing

With the success of its inaugural edition, CFF has proven to be a new benchmark for how under-the-radar destinations can gain global relevance. Powered by a blend of institutional support and savvy digital storytelling — thanks in part to Gotham Group's influencer-led content strategy — the festival sparked viral conversations, early bookings for 2026, and a growing wave of curiosity about Calabria from U.S. and international travelers.

"We are ready for the world — and the world is ready for Calabria," said Angela Donato, Executive Producer of CFF and founder of Sognare Insieme Viaggi. "This wasn't just a festival, it was a movement."

"Calabria is Mediterranean, open, and unforgettable," added Alberto Cotrona, Communications Manager. "We showed the world what happens when authenticity, beauty, and digital storytelling align."

Follow the Journey

Website: calabriafoodfest.com

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Calabria Food Fest is produced by Sognare Insieme Viaggi and GAL Serre Calabresi as part of the Le Montagne del Sole project. Supported by the Italian Ministry of Tourism's Montagna Italia

initiative, the Region of Calabria, Calabria Film Commission, Italea Program, and institutional and creative partners including Gotham Group Agency, ARSAC, Soverato Hospitality Institute, and Castle of Squillace.

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