

MENU

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# Rivals seek just desserts in the battle to own tiramisu

Tom Kington, Rome

May 18 2016, 12:01am, The Times

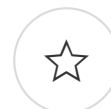


Clara and Gigi Padovani traced tiramisu's roots to the northeast region of Friuli-Venezia Giulia

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Tiramisu, whose name translates as “lift me up”, is at the centre of a bitter political battle involving two Italian regions after doubts were cast over

where the dessert was invented.

The row started with the publication this month of a book by the food experts Clara and Gigi Padovani, who traced tiramisu's roots to the northeast region of Friuli-Venezia Giulia.

After two years of research, the authors concluded that the dessert, in which egg yolks are whipped with mascarpone cheese and layered over coffee-soaked sponge biscuits then topped with cocoa powder, was dreamt up in 1950 by a chef in San Canzian d'Isonzo, a small town in Friuli-Venezia Giulia.

The research drew a furious response from Luca Zaia, governor of the neighbouring Veneto region, who has staked his reputation on tiramisu being invented in Treviso in 1970 by a restaurant owner who wanted to keep her energy up as she breastfed her baby son.

“No one will steal the tiramisu from us,” Mr Zaia thundered in a press release. “The truth is carved in stone.”

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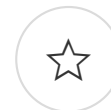
The governor is also fighting to win EU certification for the dessert, which would define its exact ingredients and stop foreigners adding unacceptable additions, such as strawberries.

The Padovanis said that the attempt by Mr Zaia to claim tiramisu for the Veneto was futile.

“We Italians are like this,” the couple told *Il Messaggero*. “While we continue to argue without reason about who invented a great idea, the idea spreads overseas without us realising and becomes the patrimony of the world.”



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