

## Da Vinci self-portrait recreated as a food masterpiece

Friday 31 May, 2019

- Leonardo da Vinci's famous self-portrait recreated with Italian ingredients including pasta, meats and cheeses for the first time
- Food masterpiece was created to celebrate the life of the Italian artist, who died 500 years ago this month, who also had a great passion for invention and cookery – and who is credited as being the inventor of spaghetti
- Commissioned by the leading Italian-style family restaurant brand Bella Italia following the launch of their brand new menu this month
- Edible portrait includes classic Italian food including spaghetti, cured meats, olives and artisan bread

Leonardo da Vinci's self-portrait has been reimagined with classic Italian ingredients, in celebration of the famous polymath who died 500 years ago this month.

The food masterpiece was commissioned by Italian restaurant chain Bella Italia to celebrate Da Vinci's life and work, and mark the launch of their new menu, available in restaurants since 8<sup>th</sup> May.

The portrait was inspired by Da Vinci's passion for both art and invention, particularly in the world of food and kitchen design innovation, including his creation of a 'spaghetti-making machine' and an automated spit that roasted meat.

Food artist Carl Warner was the mastermind behind the striking work of art, which took over 20 hours for Carl and his team to design and create, as each ingredient was painstakingly laid out to perfectly reflect the Renaissance masterpiece.

The edible artwork was crafted from a range of Italian food favourites including six different Italian pastas, three cured and sliced meats, two artisan breads, mozzarella and a handful of olives.

The portrait included: hat and coat made of two artisan breads; eyes made of mozzarella and olives, with fusilli, rigatoni and conchiglione pasta details; Parma ham lips; chicken breast and fettucine pasta face and chicken wing nose; and two types of spaghetti for the beard.

Carl Warner, food artist, said: *"I was thrilled when Bella Italia asked me to take on this challenge – the abundance of fresh, beautiful ingredients from the new menu gave me a great 'palette' to work from when reimagining the classic artwork by one of the great Italian masters. The contrasting textures and shapes of the different varieties of pasta worked particularly well when defining the details in the face of Da Vinci, which I just hope he would have enjoyed."*

Da Vinci's passion for food is well-documented in the surviving 'kitchen notebooks', left to his student Francesco Melzi, in which the famed artist, scientist and inventor recorded his thoughts on cooking, table etiquette and kitchen inventions.

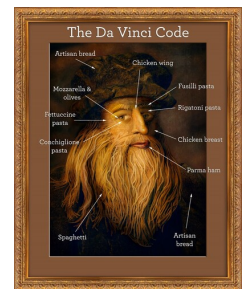
The new menu is now available in all Bella Italia restaurants nationwide. It introduces a range of over 30 new dishes including a traditional Cacio e Pepe, Gamberoni pizza, delicious dough bites and a brand-new range of desserts.

Célia Pronto, Chief Customer Officer from Bella Italia, said: *"Given our expertise in pasta, and with our new menu launch coinciding with the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Da Vinci's death, it felt like the perfect opportunity to celebrate the Italian genius in the way we know best – with delicious Italian pasta and produce! We're delighted with the finished product."*

**Bella Italia's new menu is now available in all restaurants nationwide.**

For further information visit <https://www.bellaitalia.co.uk/menu>

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Food portrait of Italian master Leonardo da Vinci

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