



L'ESSENZA DI PARMA

Where *l'Arte di Vivere* is practiced every day.



Acqua di Parma: The Essence of Italian Sophistication Since 1916

In Parma, Italy's "city of perfume", a love affair with scent goes back to Maria Luigia—Napoleon's second wife and the city's beloved duchess from 1814 to 1847—whose passion for violets helped put Parma on the olfactory map. Her legacy set the stage for the 20th century, when local Baron Carlo Magnani—a man of refined taste and independent spirit—set out to create a personal fragrance that reflected his roots and way of life: elegant, modern, and unmistakably Italian. The result was 1916's Colonia, Acqua di Parma's first perfume and Italy's first Eau de Cologne. Light and radiant, it captured the essence of Italian *gioia di vivere*—a scent of zesty citrus that spoke of summer days, open windows, and the easy beauty of life well lived. More than a fragrance, it was a bold alternative to the rich, layered French perfumes of the time, a way for Magnani to keep the warmth and ease of Italy close, even while abroad. Over a century later, the cologne is still a top seller, and the Maison—now with many more scents—remains a symbol of Italian craftsmanship and *arte di vivere*: the art of living and living well.

Acqua di Parma's visual identity pays homage to its storied origins. The golden yellow is inspired by Parma's Baroque façades and continues to remind of the Italian sun, and the coat of arms is inspired by Maria Luigia. The signature Art Deco bottle, introduced in 1930, echoes the design style popular across Italy during that era; the minimalist rounded glass base, with a black stopper, is housed in a matching handcrafted hatbox, with every label applied by hand. The hatbox recalls tailor shops of the '20s and '30s, where men would spritz Colonia on their pocket square—a potent, if invisible, signature of style.

All fragrances bear Acqua di Parma's unmistakable signature: a bright, clean, and vibrant sillage designed to uplift and elevate the everyday. The Colonia collection contains the citrus and aromatic heart notes that reflect the brand's foundational identity, while Blu Mediterraneo's blend of Mediterranean ingredients celebrates Italy's coastal vitality. The Signatures of the Sun collection highlights single ingredients from around the world through an unmistakably Italian lens.

Now, as Acqua di Parma celebrates 110 years, the Maison continues to distill the same ease and refinement that first defined its Italian spirit—reminding us that *l'arte di vivere* lies not in luxury alone, but in finding radiance in life's everyday moments.

Why Parma Might Be Italy's Most Elegant City

From the table to the theater, poise feels like second nature here.

By Sofia Sabatucci

"In Parma, it's not difficult to live, as long as you can justify your stance in a musical or gastronomic discussion." —Maria Luigia, Duchess of Parma

Traveling along the Via Emilia, you'll reach a city an hour past Bologna that wears its history like a well-tailored suit. And that's not just a figure of speech. This town is Parma, a small city in the Po Valley, and its reputation precedes it: the birthplace of some of Italy's best gastronomic products, but also of Italian perfume and a certain cultivated style. In the center, bistro-like restaurants spill onto cobbled streets, flower shops brighten corners, and façades glow in that unmistakable shade of Parma yellow.

Parma's reputation for refinement dates back to the mid-16th century, when the city detached from the Papal States to form the Duchy of Parma and Piacenza under the Farnese family. The 18th century brought the Bourbons, and with them a flair that would forever soften the city's edges. Luisa Elisabetta, eldest daughter of King Louis XV, married Filippo I of Parma and filled the court with architects, decorators, and artisans who brought a discerning culture and way of life with them.

Among them, architect Ennemond Alexandre Petitot and Parisian sculptor Jean-Baptiste Boudard reshaped Parma's streets and redefined the city's visual identity, successfully clinching Parma's place among the European capitals of art and taste. Petitot, too, gave the city its signature sunny hue; legend has it he drew



inspiration from the locals, who, in celebration of Isabella of Bourbon's wedding, painted their houses yellow to match her blond locks.

Today, wandering the city's streets, one still feels that joyful elegance; I'm guided past some of Petitot's cheery palaces with Giancarlo Gonizzi, Parma-based cultural historian and coordinator of the *Musei del Cibo*. We start in the city center at **Piazza Garibaldi**, the long-lasting, busy hub of political and social affairs; here, municipal buildings favor neoclassical architecture over the standardized medieval style found elsewhere in the region.

Nearby, the emblematic **Ducal Park** offers expansive greenery and has become like the city's open-air drawing room. "The Enlightenment Minister Guillaume du Tulliot also asked Petitot to design a wide, tree-lined boulevard, which citizens know today as the **Stradone**," Gonizzi tells me.

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The Art of Living in Parma

By Italy Segreta Team

In Parma, even the air itself seems cultured. It smells of aging Parmigiano Reggiano, of sweet prosciutto hanging in humid cellars, and, on certain nights, it carries the distant, dramatic swell of a Verdi aria. This is the heart of Emilia-Romagna, Italy's "Food Valley," but it is also a city of profound art, music, and a refined, unhurried pace of life that defines the Italian concept of *l'arte di vivere*—the art of living.

This is not the chaotic grandeur of Rome or the Renaissance wonderland of Florence. Parma's appeal is more subtle. It is a city that, as local restaurateur Virgilio Buratti Zanchi puts it, "allows you to enjoy the advantages of a big city—university, work, cinema, theater, gastronomy—while enjoying the benefits of a small town."

Here, you can gaze upon the High Renaissance masterpieces of Correggio and Parmigianino in the morning and reach anywhere you need to go by bicycle in the afternoon. You can step into the octagonal Battistero, sheathed in pink Verona marble—a Romanesque-to-Gothic bridge ringed with zodiac reliefs and 13th-century frescoes—before running into your friend around the corner.

In Parma, the art of living is practiced daily in the city's theaters, osterias, and historic shops. Here, six such places that capture the spirit of Parma.

OSTERIA VIRGILIO

In the historic Oltretorrente neighborhood, across the river from Parma's grand *palazzi*, Virgilio Buratti Zanchi has been what locals call an *oste resistente*—a "resistant innkeeper"—since 2003. His Osteria Virgilio serves as



Osteria Virgilio



Teatro Regio

Parma's intimate 30-seat bastion for the most authentic local flavors.

"Parma's regional cuisine has been codified for many years, therefore recipes have a very strong and unchangeable identity," he explains. Nowhere is this code more fiercely protected than in pasta. The restaurant is a pilgrimage site for Parma's two foundational stuffed pastas. First is *anolini in brodo*—tiny pasta parcels filled with *stracotto* and Parmigiano, and served in a rich broth—which are a non-negotiable part of every local Christmas. The secret, Virgilio explains, is "excellent 36-month-old Parmigiano and the size of the *anolino* itself: small and thin."

Alongside them are the equally delicious *tortelli d'erbetta*, the rectangular ravioli filled with ricotta and herbs, traditionally served (as they are here) drowned in butter and snowed over with Parmigiano.

GRAN CAFFÈ CAVOUR

In Parma, *colazione* (breakfast) is a cherished daily rite, and the Gran Caffè Cavour is its most elegant stage. As one of the city's *botteghe storiche* (historic shops), it serves as Parma's true *salotto* (drawing room), balancing a clientele of refined locals and curious visitors. Its magnificent Art Nouveau interiors, dating to its opening around the early 20th century, are defined by intricate stucco, gilded mirrors, and dark wood paneling; a grand crystal chandelier dominates the main room, illuminating the high ceilings. This was the chosen meeting place for Parma's intellectuals, including the poet Attilio Bertolucci and writer Giovannino Guares-

chi, who came to debate all sorts of matters over coffee.

The pastry case itself is a work of art, featuring a stunning array of *pasticcERIA mignone* (miniature pastries)—tiny fruit tarts, bigné filled with chantilly or chocolate—alongside generous *crostate*, rich with seasonal jam, and local specialties like the *torta di riso* (a traditional rice cake) or the opulent Duchessa, a dome-shaped cake created for Duchess Maria Luigia, layered with zabaglione and chocolate.

TEATRO REGIO

Parma's cultural life revolves around music, and its temple is the Teatro Regio, a stunning neoclassical opera house commissioned by Duchess Maria Luigia (who watched her operas from the Royal Box). When it opened in 1829 with *Zaira*, an opera composed for the occasion by Vincenzo Bellini, it was a statement of her modern vision: it was the first public theater in the territory, open to all social classes and built with integrated production spaces like rehearsal rooms, scenography workshops, and tailoring facilities.

Designed by the architect Nicola Bettoli, who took his inspiration from Milan's Teatro alla Scala, the 1,200-seat theater was built to be a "harmonic resonance box," explains one of the theater's official guides, with a horseshoe shape and wooden construction to perfect its acoustics. Though Maria Luigia's original blue-and-gold decor was stripped away in 1853 by a new duke, the magnificent sky-blue ceiling, painted with Greek gods, remains from the original design.



Gran Caffè Cavour

The theater is the global epicenter for the music of Parma's native son, Giuseppe Verdi, who was born just outside the city. It hosts the annual Festival Verdi, a month-long immersion in the maestro's works that also spills into the streets with Verdi OFF-free performances across the city from deconsecrated churches to piazzas, retirement homes, and prisons.

But the theater's most unique feature is hidden behind the box seats: *retropalchi*—private, furnished back-rooms. The guide explains that in the 19th century, these were “private spaces where nobles could gamble, flirt, eat, and drink.” These spaces have been passed down through the local families, furnished and decorated as they wish, and it's not uncommon to find a few hosting aperitivo in them before the shows start.

ANTICA FARMACIA SAN FILIPPO NERI

Inside the Palazzo San Tiburzio is a place that captures Parma's deep-seated social conscience: the Antica Farmacia San Filippo Neri. A perfectly preserved 18th-century laboratory, the pharmacy was founded by the Congregazione di Carità (Congregation of Charity), a civic group established in 1500 to care for the city's poor.

For centuries, this pharmacy never sold anything, explains spokesperson Anna Mambrioni. “Its sole purpose was to produce pharmaceuticals to distribute for free to the sick in need.” The Congregation's doctors would visit the poor in their homes and return to the pharmacy to retrieve the necessary cures—the first structured home assistance in the world.

The pharmacy's work was so revered that when Napoleon was dissolving religious orders, he not only preserved Parma's Congregation but ordered that Congregations of Charity in every city of Italy be established based on its model. The pharmacy was later awarded a gold medal by Duchess Maria Luigia for its work to stop a cholera epidemic in 1836 and,

along with French authorities, managed one of Italy's first vaccination campaigns against smallpox.

Today, the pharmacy is a museum and educational center, its wooden shelves lined with original 18th-century jars that contain ingredients like crab eyes, belladonna, and “*sangue di drago*”, not actually dragon's blood but the root of a red plant.

Anna Mambrioni explains that this history is directly linked to another of Parma's famed industries. “At ancient pharmacies or apothecaries,” she says, “distillation techniques were developed and aromatic plants were used, giving rise to what we know today as perfumery.” In Parma, it seems, even the art of healing is inseparable from the art of living.

CIACCO

In Piazza della Steccata, you'll find Ciacco, a gelateria built on a philosophy of radical purity, summed up by its motto: “*gelato senz'altro*” (“gelato without anything else”). For founder Stefano Guizzetti, a “scientist-gelatiere” who moved to Parma to study Food Science and opened Ciacco in 2013, this means short ingredient lists that lead to true, intense flavors.

Guizzetti's “lab” is a library of tastes, built on a network of relationships with local farmers, and his philosophy of using everything—not just peels, but also infusions from hay, fig leaves, or even bark—results in flavors that are elegant, surprising, and constantly rotating. You might find a bright Lemon and Juniper, a refreshing Hibiscus, Pineapple and Mint, or an earthy autumnal Pumpkin, served alongside pristine classics made from Bronte DOP pistachios or organic Uji matcha. Try some scoops at Ciacco—housed in an *antica cappelleria*, a charming, century-old hat shop that's retained its original wooden furnishings—and you'll experience a modern expression of Parma's deepest value: that the highest form of art comes from the purest ingredients.



The view of Piazza della Steccata from Ciacco

LA PROSCIUTTERIA

“You live well, and above all, you eat well,” says Andrea Venturini of Parma; he works at one of the city's premier delicatessens, La Prosciutteria. While many come for Prosciutto di Parma and Parmigiano Reggiano, Venturini points to a holy trinity of local cured meats. There's *culatello*, the prized heart of the pork thigh; *culaccia*, a similar cut aged with its rind; and *strolghino*, a salame made from the lean parts of *culatello*. Its name, from

strolga (diviner), comes from its use as a quick-curing salame to “predict” the quality of the long-aging *culatello*.

The craft here extends to the aforementioned *anolini*. “*La sua morte è col brodo*,” Venturini jokes—its destiny is to end up in broth. “The climate doesn't help, but all the food certainly does,” he finishes. It's a sentiment that captures the city perfectly: even when the Po Valley fog hangs heavy, the warmth of Parma is found at the table.



Antica Farmacia San Filippo Neri



La Prosciutteria



Parma is Italy's Perfume Capital

By Italy Segreta Team

Emilia-Romagna's second largest city has fragrance woven into its fabric and a two-century legacy to prove it. The roots of Parma's perfumed heritage trace back to the reign of Maria Luigia, Duchess of Parma, during the early 19th century. An Austrian archduchess and Napoleon Bonaparte's second wife, Maria Luigia brought a refined taste for French luxury when she moved from France, her court becoming a nexus of cultural exchange between Italian artisans and French sensibilities. She introduced a full opera calendar, constructed a theater, and even planned one of the first public housing interventions. But the novelty with the longest silage was the local perfumery.

Maria Luigia loved the violets grown around Parma—the *Viola odorata*, which she affectionately called a “graceful little flower”—and tasked the skilled monks of the Monastery of the Annunciata with discovering ways to extract their essence and create a perfume. The result was the *Eau di Toilette “Violetta di Parma”*,

a fragrance made for her alone and whose secret recipe was protected for generations... Until the Victorian era, when a curious young Parma barber convinced the monks to share the formula, which, turns out, also contained jasmine, hyacinth, and vanilla. He recreated the perfume and began to experiment with other compositions and botanicals, becoming popular first with Parma's female contingent and later with clients further abroad. Perfume was no longer a reserve of the courts; everyone, or at least those with the purchasing power, could have a touch of what Maria Luigia loved so dearly.

Yet, aside from the violet scent, France still dominated the olfactory market. That got shaken up in 1916, when Baron Carlo Magnani founded *Acqua di Parma* with the goal of offering fragrances that were both distinctly Italian and globally appealing. A worldly man, Magnani often traveled to cities like New York and London to trade textiles and collect art, but he carried with him a deep nostalgia for his native Italy—its sun, colors, and inimitable lightness. He wanted a fragrance that would remind him of home.

Parma was the right place, for thanks to Maria Luigia, the city al-

ready had the right structures for perfume making, plus the people qualified to do it. His inaugural scent, *Colonia*, was a departure from the heavy perfumes of the time, introducing a fresh, citrus-forward recipe that was light and playful—*sprezzatura* embottled. It was Italy's first *Eau de Cologne*. *Colonia* quickly became a symbol of Italian craftsmanship, and gentlemen at the city's finest ateliers were known to scent their pocket squares with the stuff.

The cologne's popularity skyrocketed in the 1940s and '50s among the European aristocracy and Hollywood and Cinecittà elite, including the likes of Cary Grant and Audrey Hepburn, marking the first time Italian perfumery really claimed its place on the global stage. And Parma, as its birthplace, became the city synonymous with Italian perfume.

Fast forward to today, and you'll find Parma's legacy on display at the *Museo della Profumeria*, a museum dedicated to the art and history of perfumery, showcasing artifacts that chronicle the evolution of scent-making in the region. Stroll through its halls, or wear a spritz of *Acqua di Parma*, and it's easy to see why Parma has earned the title of “*la città del profumo*”.

The Nose Behind Colonia Millesimato: Alexis Dadier on Crafting a Celebratory Scent

Acqua di Parma: This marks a new chapter for Colonia. Can you tell us more?

AD: It is indeed a special chapter. For this anniversary edition, I wanted to honor *Colonia Il Profumo* by celebrating a rare ingredient: the 2024 ylang-ylang flower harvest. Its extraordinary bright qualities inspired me to reinterpret the perfume, creating a fragrance that feels even more luminous.

AdP: How did Italy influence this scent?

AD: At its core, *Acqua di Parma* is an ode to the Italian *gioia di vivere*. The citrus notes—Calabrian bergamot, blood orange, petitgrain, and grapefruit—embody the warmth of the Italian sun, enhanced here with the ylang-ylang to reflect the refined and graceful art of Italian living.

AdP: How did you celebrate our 110th anniversary through scent?

AD: An anniversary of this scale is about honoring heritage. For me, that meant elevating an *Acqua di Parma* icon with a rare ingredient. The 2024 ylang-ylang harvest was the perfect way to highlight *Colonia Il Profumo*'s essence, making it feel even more celebratory for this milestone.

AdP: How would you describe the signature of Colonia Il Profumo Millesimato?

AD: Refined, sparkling, and citrus-aromatic. The scent opens with citrus and the 2024 ylang-ylang white fraction, balanced with green notes and grounded in a woody base—timeless yet distinctive.

AdP: What is the fragrance's olfactory pyramid?

AD: The top notes are Calabrian bergamot, blood orange, grapefruit, and petitgrain. Its heart, the 2024 ylang-ylang, brings creamy floral notes of tiaré and frangipani, balanced by green rosemary and orange leaf absolute. The base of smoky vetiver heart and patchouli provides a refined woody foundation.

AdP: Did you have a certain image in mind when crafting the scent?

AD: I pictured *Nosy Be*, the “*Perfume Island*” off Madagascar, with its volcanic soils, lush biodiversity, and ideal climate. The 2024 harvest was shaped by abundant rainfall and gentle temperatures, resulting in flowers of extraordinary quality. I wanted to capture the sunlight of this paradise and bring it to *Colonia* as a tribute both to nature's beauty and *Acqua di Parma*'s heritage.

AdP: Who do you imagine wearing this fragrance?

AD: Someone who values sophistication, authenticity, and heritage, and who appreciates craftsmanship, rarity, and timeless style. It's a celebratory scent for everyday wear that adds a touch of Italian *arte di vivere*.

Colonia Il Profumo Millesimato

This year, *Acqua di Parma* marks 110 years since its first fragrance—and celebrates with a luminous new chapter: *Colonia Il Profumo Millesimato*. Founded in Parma in 1916 by Baron Carlo Magnani, the *Maison* has long shaped its own *arte di vivere*—refined, radiant, and distinctly Italian. *Colonia*, the original *Eau de Cologne*, remains its north star: an expression of effortless sophistication born in Parma, Italy's historic capital of perfumery.

Across the decades, this way of living has been reimagined for the present—rooted in tradition, but always in motion. That spirit defines *Colonia Il Profumo Millesimato*, a limited edition created for the 110th anniversary by perfumer Alexis Dadier, offering a fresh angle on the *Maison*'s icon. Like a portrait seen through different lenses, each iteration—*Colonia*, *Colonia Il Profumo*, and now the *Millesimato*—reveals a new facet of the same subject. Together, they form a continuum: distinct yet connected, each illuminating Italian elegance in its own way.

At the heart of *Millesimato* is the exceptional 2024 harvest of ylang-ylang from *Nosy Be*, cultivated in the island's tropical climate where the flowers develop a nuanced profile—

fruity with a gentle, spiced undertone. A rare alignment of abundant rainfall and soft warmth that year has yielded an unusually bright, complex quality. Expertly distilled over 24 hours and delicately fractionated, this ylang-ylang heightens the sparkle of the citrus notes and lends depth to the whole. Calabrian bergamot, blood orange, petitgrain, and grapefruit open with golden freshness; rosemary, orange leaf absolute, patchouli, and vetiver give the structure and poise of a modern citrus aromatic.

“This rare ylang-ylang white harvest's extraordinary radiance and nat-

ural solarly inspired me to revisit the icon of *Colonia* in a way that feels even more luminous and precious,” Dadier elaborates. “By incorporating this unique quality, the fragrance elevates *Colonia*'s character while remaining faithful to its timeless spirit.”

Presented in a glass bottle etched with architectural detail, housed in *Acqua di Parma*'s iconic yellow hatbox, and sealed with a golden medal honoring the harvest and the 110th anniversary, *Colonia Il Profumo Millesimato* is both a collector's edition and a refined continuation of a century-old scent.





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The first example of its kind in Italy, the Stradone was divided into three lanes: the wider central one for the passage of carriages—and today for car traffic—and the side lanes for walking. Locals stroll under the four rows of horse chestnut trees, shading the avenue, where courtiers once debated Enlightenment ideals on the marble benches. “At the end of the street, Petitot erected a small café [**Casinetto Petitot** today] overlooking the surrounding countryside,” Gonizzi continues, “where the bourgeoisie and nobles could meet.”

Art and culture thrived alongside this urban sophistication. The modern-day **National Gallery**, founded by Duke Philip Bourbon and minister Guillaume du Tulliot in 1752, quickly became one of Europe’s most vital cultural institutions, housing works like Guillaume-Guillon Lethière’s *Morte di Virginia* (*Death of Virginia*). And the **Palatine Library**, also founded by the Duke in 1761, offered instruction across disciplines, reflecting a city that valued learning as much as beauty.

It’s Maria Luigia of Habsburg, Napoleon’s second wife and Parma’s Duchess from 1814 to 1847, who perhaps left the greatest mark on Parma’s poise, however. “If you ask a

person from Parma to name a duke or duchess, the first name that will come to mind is undoubtedly Maria Luigia,” says Francesca Sandrini, director of the Glauco Lombardi Museum and the city’s leading expert on the figure, before explaining that the “Good Duchess” is an icon for the city.

Her reign combined pragmatism with grace. She discouraged symbols of the French Revolution and focused on building practical welfare programs, borrowing policy ideas from abroad. She rebuilt a city hurt by poverty, unemployment, and disease—developing initiatives for mothers and young children (such as support for pregnancy, infant care, and early education), personally tending to the sick during typhoid and cholera outbreaks, and commissioning Via della Salute, one of the first public housing interventions in Italy.

Even as she prioritized welfare and public health, Maria Luigia indulged in a refined cultural life. “Maria Luigia loved music, theater, and painting, which she tried her hand at,” Sandrini continues, “To her we owe the construction of the Nuovo Teatro Ducale, now called **Teatro Regio**, around which revolved first-rate figures of the Italian 19th-century musical scene, first among them Giuseppe Verdi.” With an operatic resume including *Nabucco* and *Aida*,

Verdi wrote operas that often gave voice to the ideals of the Italian Risorgimento and is now considered among that century’s greatest composers. Today, the Verdi Festival and Verdi OFF, rooted in her vision, bring the city to life with a schedule of free operatic events every year.

Among the finer things in life that Maria Luigia loved were violets—specifically the local *Viola Obo-rata*. She commissioned local monks to capture their essence; they created a secret fragrance that blended violet with jasmine, hyacinth, and vanilla. Originally made for the Duchess alone, the formula was later adapted by a local barber and produced at scale thanks to the skilled workshops and small manufacturers Maria Luigia nurtured. A century on, Parma would become the birthplace of Italy’s first Eau de Cologne, and today a single spritz still carries her signature.

Walking Parma today, you sense the lasting impact of these centuries, especially on streets like Borgo XX with countless antique stores, boutiques, and art galleries, including **Mercanteinfiera**—the annual furniture fair chock-full of rare antiques and modern design pieces. Bars and restaurants present top-notch dining experiences, from **Osteria Virgilio** to gelateria **Ciaccio**, where

elegant, seasonal, and sometimes floral flavors are scooped. Around town, and especially during the festive season, you’ll find dishes favored by Maria Luigia, such as “*tortél dôls*”—sweet tortelli filled with breadcrumbs, cooked wine, and pear *mostarda*—and “*torta Duchessa*”—a three-layer cake made with hazelnut-flour short-crust pastry and filled with chocolate pastry cream and zabaglione; try the latter at **Pasticceria Cocconi** in the city center. Look for candied violet bonbons in pastry shops, like **San Biagio** on Via Carlo Pisacane.

The effects of this era also remain heard, in Parma’s dialect: potatoes, popularly called “*pom da tera*”, are reminiscent of the French “*pommes-de-terre*”, as is “*tirabusòn*”, corkscrew, a direct import of the French “*tire-bouchon*”. It’s easy to understand why Parma has earned the nickname of Italy’s “petit Paris”—though the city has refashioned those French threads into something unmistakably Parmigiano. Elegance here is not a borrowed trait, but one cultivated and passed down through the centuries. Ultimately, Parma’s poise is defined by the taste and style of its citizens, who continue to pay attention to *l’arte di vivere* in dressing, eating, and entertaining that you’ll be hard pressed to find elsewhere.



Parma Yellow

By Italy Segreta Team

Forget lemon, ditch the mustard, and please, let's move past beige. Parma Yellow is a yellow with a past. And, far from the screaming yellow of a sports car or the acidic zing of a highlighter, Parma Yellow is sophisticated.

Parma Yellow's story begins with the powerful Farnese family, who painted their palaces in rich ochres to emulate the gold they possessed. But it was under the Bourbon dynasty in the mid-18th century that the city truly found its signature hue. The young French architect Ennemond Alexandre Petitot was tasked with restoring Parma's most important buildings, and he had a vision.

Charmed by the residents of Strada San Michele, who had painted their houses a brilliant golden yellow to celebrate the wedding procession of Isabella of Bourbon (mirroring the color of her long, curly tresses), Petitot decided to orchestrate a city-wide symphony in yellow. He started with the grand buildings of Piazza Garibaldi, painting them in this now-iconic shade to both advertise the court's wealth and give the space the effect of a permanent sunny glow.

When Napoleon's second wife, the beloved Duchess Maria Luigia

of Austria, arrived, she introduced her own variation—a more robust, darker yellow that you can still see on landmarks like the magnificent Teatro Reggio and the Palazzo del Governatore. The color became so wrapped up in Parmigiano identity that up until the 1950s, it was mandatory by law to paint building façades in a shade of yellow.

Though the color may no longer be obligatory, walk through the city today, especially as the morning light slants through the streets, and you'll see it everywhere, adorning the stately fronts of palaces and humble apartment blocks alike. But in Parma, the color is more than just architectural. You can also find it in the creamy, pale yellow of a perfectly aged wheel of Parmigiano-Reggiano or the deep gold of an egg yolk destined for a silky sheet of fresh pasta. It radiates from the cheerful packaging of Acqua di Parma's perfumes—a direct homage to its home city.

Ultimately, Parma Yellow is more than just a pretty pigment on a wall. It's the city's signature—a sun-kissed shade that captures Parma's spirit, at once regal and profoundly welcoming.

HOW TO SPEAK IN PARMIGIANO

By Italy Segreta Team

If Italian is a feast of expressions, then dialects are the secret recipes. Parmigiano (a.k.a. *al djalètt pranzàn**), the dialect of Parma and its countryside, is no exception. Rich, grounded, and full of wry humor, these are nine Parmigiano sayings worth adding to your linguistic pantry.

**Parmigiano is part of the Gallo-Italic Emilian family, classified by UNESCO as endangered. Which is all the more reason to keep these phrases in circulation!*

Veddroz tór via j anolén ded-sotta al nāz

"To see the anolini taken away from under your nose."

To be interrupted on a high; to be cut off at the best moment. There's no deeper heartbreak in Parma than watching *anolini*—those plump, comforting parcels of pasta—whisked away before you've had your turn. A phrase for life's small injustices.

Fär tant äd savata

"To be left with an open mouth."

To be gobsmacked. That stunned silence when something (or someone) leaves you speechless—the kind of shock that makes you forget your manners.

Sérca äd dār'gh un briz äd lima

"Try to give him a little bit of a file [like a metal file]."

To smooth someone down; in other words, to calm them down a notch. When tempers rise, a touch of metaphorical sanding keeps things civil—a linguistic manicure for moods.

Parér descäls insimma a j articiòch

"To go barefoot on artichokes."

To tiptoe around something or tread carefully. Because life has patches as prickly as an artichoke.

La pu trissta róda dal car l'é colla ch'a siga

"The saddest wheel of the cart is the one that squeals."

Meaning the loudest voice is often the one that knows the least. A lesson in restraint: let your work, not your volume, do the talking.

Te t' n' acorzarè in-t-al pisär

"You'll realize it at the weighing."

The reckoning will come; you'll pay when it counts. Whether it's the butcher's scale or fate's, it all eventually adds up. Parma's way of saying: every gram of your choices counts.

Negosjànt da fibbji scompagni

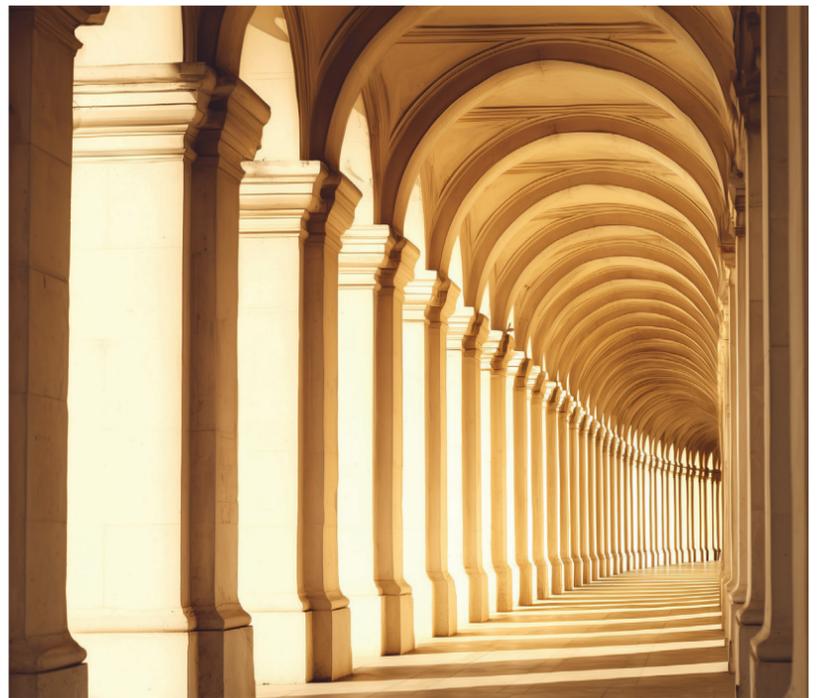
"A merchant with mismatched buckles."

An unreliable trader; someone whose word doesn't match their wares. In Parma, even style must have symmetry—or it's not to be trusted.

Zbasär la gressta

"To lower the crest/comb."

To regain humility. Tell this to someone whose ego is puffed up like a rooster's crest, and they'll (hopefully) be reminded to smooth their feathers and get grounded.



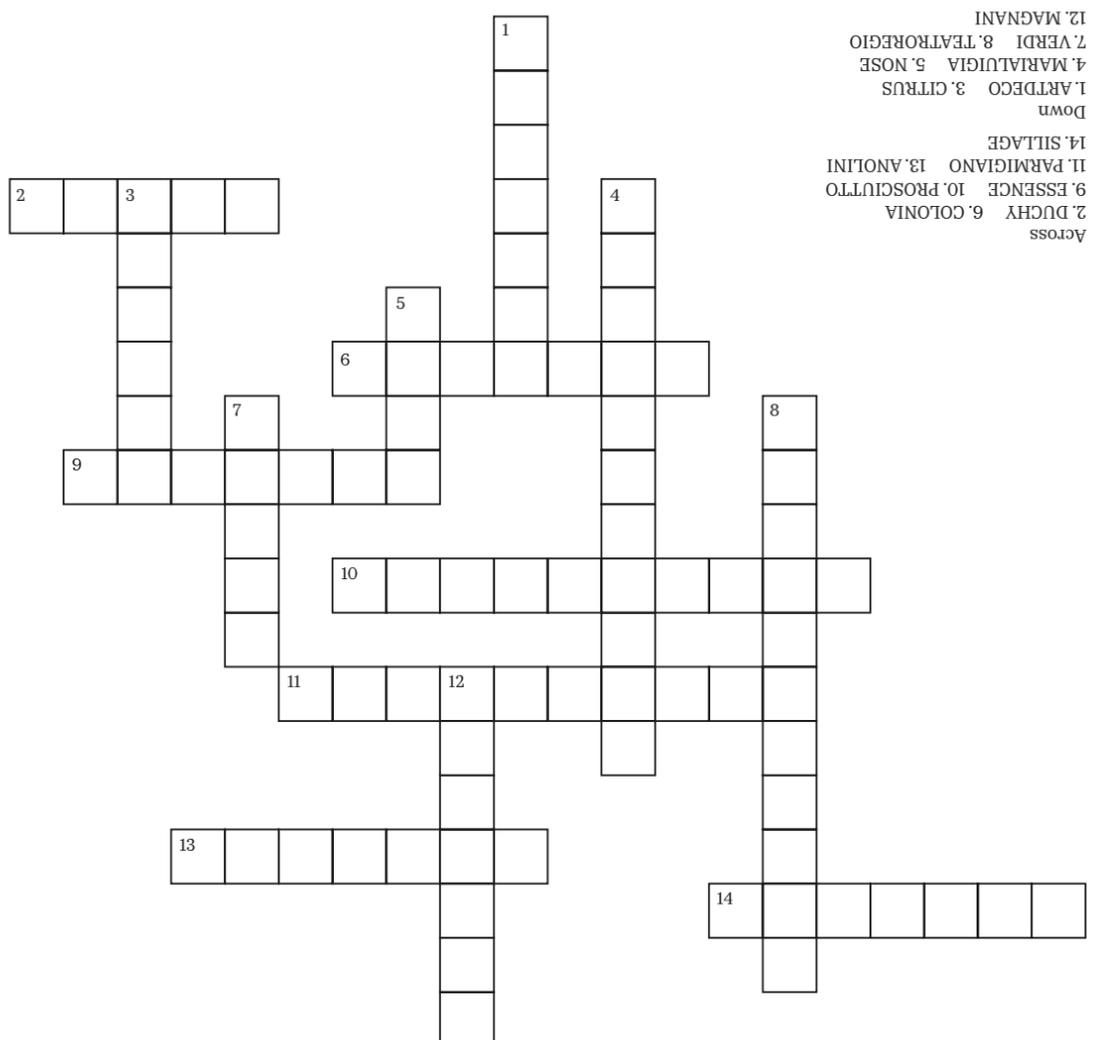
Crossword

Across

- Parma was famously one, ruled by the Farnese family.
- The original 1916 fragrance from Acqua di Parma, a timeless classic.
- The indispensable quality of something. Or the inherent nature of a fragrance.
- Famous cured meat from Parma, often served paper-thin.
- The "King of Cheeses," a world-famous export from Parma.
- A traditional stuffed pasta from Parma, typically served floating in a rich meat broth.
- The fragrant trail left behind by a perfume (French loanword).

Down

- The elegant, geometric style of the iconic Acqua di Parma bottle.
- The family of "frutti d'oro" (golden fruits) that gives Colonia its sparkling opening.
- Napoleon's second wife and Duchess of Parma, who adored violet scents.
- The professional term for a master perfumer.
- Famed opera composer, a cultural titan of Parma.
- Parma's prestigious 19th-century opera house.
- Carlo _____, the founder who created the first Acqua di Parma cologne in 1916.



12. MAGNANI
7. VERDI 8. TEATROREGGIO
4. MARIATUIGIA 5. NOSE
1. ARTDECO 3. CITRUS
Down
14. SILLAGE
11. PARMIGIANO 13. ANOLINI
9. ESSENCE 10. PROSCIUTTO
2. DUCHY 6. COLONIA
Across

What Acqua di Parma Fragrance Are You, According to Your Zodiac Sign?

From the zesty burst of citrus groves to the cozy warmth of rare woods, each fragrance tells a story. But which one tells yours? We look to the stars to divine which Acqua di Parma bottle contains your celestial scent.

ARIES

Aries are the zodiac's irrepressible spark, a fiery and dynamic force who leads with passion and courage. They don't just embrace intensity, they radiate it. Their scent must be a match for this vibrant energy, making **ZAFFERANO** the perfect counterpart. A fragrance from the ambery woody family, it opens with a vibrant blend of bergamot, mandarin, and coriander seeds. That initial hit of red citrus is the olfactory equivalent of these fire signs' invigorating presence. At its heart, precious saffron—a spice as fiery and coveted as the Aries spirit—intertwines with rose and orange flower, creating a captivating and unapologetically bold core. What better than an intensely singular fragrance for an intensely singular sign?

TAURUS

The Taurean soul is deeply connected to the earth (they're earth signs, after all!), finding peace and pleasure in all things sensual, tangible, and stable. They understand that true luxury is not frivolous but a deep, comforting quality, and **ODU** is the ideal match—a fragrance that captures the deep notes of agarwood's rare oud essence, a direct link to the woody, earthy element these bulls embody. Rather than a fleeting accessory, their fragrance must be a cornerstone of the world they so patiently build around themselves. Oud understands this. While it opens with a glimmer of bright citrus, its heart is rooted in Russian coriander and its base in a supple leather accord that grounds the composition in the Taurean tactile world. This is a steadfast scent for a steadfast sign.

GEMINI

Gemini are a sensory celebration of contrasts and need a scent that can keep pace with their brilliant, ever-curious mind. Ruled by Mercury, these air signs dance between light

and shadow, wit and wisdom, and **GELSOMINO** is the ultimate partner for their intellectual ballet. This fragrance masterfully captures the Gemini duality: on one hand, the radiant white jasmine notes bring an air of lightness and purity, reflecting their breezy, sociable, and communicative side. On the other, smoky undertones of black tea and guaiac wood add depth and intrigue, hinting at their complex inner world. The captivating tension between these elements is the very essence of the twins' charm, creating a bold, elegant, and modern composition for the sign that proves two heads are infinitely better than one.

CANCER

Cancers are the zodiac's keeper of memories, finding profound beauty in tradition, heritage, and the comfort of the familiar. Their hearts are moved by things with a story, which is why the original, iconic **COLONIA**, created in 1916, is their soul's scent. The emblematic Acqua di Parma Eau de Cologne was Italy's first-ever cologne—a timeless fragrance that's full of warmth and nostalgia. Its instantly recognizable character comes from a sparkling blend of lemon, Calabrian bergamot, and orange, and the aromatic heart, where lavender and rosemary intertwine, is a soothing balm, a scent of home and hearth. It's a fragrance that has graced generations, a classic that provides the sense of security and enduring love that dear Cancers so beautifully cultivate in the world.

LEO

Leos are ruled by the sun, and they were born to shine. These proud lions need a fragrance that doesn't just complement their radiance but amplifies it. **COLONIA MILLESIMATO** is pure solar power, bottled. This is a modern and intensified interpretation of a classic that draws from the golden radiance of the Italian sun—Leo's celestial ruler. An opulent opening of bergamot, grapefruit, and blood orange matches Leo's dazzling entrances; the heart beats with ylang-ylang, an ingredient chosen for the volume and intensity it brings, mirroring these fire signs' own magnificent presence. This fragrance is an olfactory statement of royalty, a rich and modern take on a timeless icon that, like Leo, is impossible to ignore and unforgettable in its splendor.

VIRGO

For Virgos, a "good morning" is not a matter of chance—it is an act of will, a daily ritual of bringing order and intention to the world. These earth signs bring their best to every day, and they deserve a fragrance that honors this devotion. **BUONGIORNO** is their mission statement in per-

fume form. It captures new beginnings, with an uplifting vitality and freshness—think basil, freshly-cut grass, sun-dried linen—that mirrors the pristine slate they create for themselves each dawn. With a keen eye for detail and appreciation for all things pure, clean, and well-crafted, Virgos find a kindred spirit in a scent that is an ode to finding beauty in the smallest things.

LIBRA

Libra, as a child of Venus, is the zodiac's aesthete, forever seeking beauty and harmony in a world of contrasts. These air signs' fragrance must be a masterpiece of balance, and **LUCE DI ROSA** is their flawless composition. This scent is the embodiment of dynamism, reimagining the classic rose through a masterful interplay of light and shadow; the perfume creates a harmonious effect by skillfully balancing a sharp, mineral quality against deep warmth, much the way a Libra alternates between intensity and softness until reaching equilibrium. As it settles, the fragrance is designed to unveil different sensations over time, a beautiful match for Libra's diplomatic mind—constantly capable of seeing things from a new and graceful angle.

SCORPIO

Scorpios are the most intense and mysterious of the zodiac, a sign captivated by power, passion, and the promise of eternity. They require a fragrance that operates on the same level of depth and complexity, and that would be the **AMBROSIA** range. These fragrances were inspired by the mythical elixir of the gods, and both Gelsomino Ambrosia and Zafferano Ambrosia are defined by an exceptional intensity and a greater concentration of perfume oil, reflecting these water signs' own potent nature. Gelsomino Ambrosia speaks to their strategic, mysterious side, with deep notes of black tea and myrrh, while Zafferano Ambrosia, a shimmering and spicy elixir, represents their magnetic sensuality, settling into a profoundly deep and sensual base of patchouli, vanilla, and amber accords. Together, they represent the dual forces of Scorpio's personality: the piercing insight and the all-consuming passion.

SAGITTARIUS

Sagittarius is the zodiac's great adventurer, forever aiming their arrow toward the horizon in search of knowledge, freedom, and new experiences. This fire sign's scent must capture the feeling of boundless optimism and the thrill of the journey, and **ARANCIA DI CAPRI**, in the Blu Mediterraneo La Riserva collection, does just that. A zesty infusion of Italian blood orange and rosemary greets with the same brilliant freshness as the sun in the Piazzetta, instantly capturing Sagittarius' effervescent spirit. Then the fragrance deepens, weaving an aromatic blend of basil that evokes the green, rugged pathways lining the cliffs up to Anacapri. This is the scent of discovery, capturing the expansive joy of a Sagittarius in a world waiting to be explored.

CAPRICORN

Capricorns are the stoic architects of the zodiac—the sign of ambition, structure, and enduring legacy. These earth signs understand the value of patience and hard work, and appreciate quality that stands the test of time. Their fragrance is **MIRTO DI**



PANAREA, a Blu Mediterraneo La Riserva scent inspired by the wild myrtle fruit and rugged landscape of Panarea's volcanic fields. It's one that embodies the strength and resilience of the mountain Capricorns are determined to climb. Built upon a warm, earthy foundation of patchouli fraction, labdanum absolute, and lentiscus absolute, the fragrance creates the kind of lasting impression Capricorns strive to make in all their endeavors. This solid base supports a heart of rich myrtle and the profound depth of myrrh absolute, an ancient and precious resin that speaks to these goats' appreciation for substance and enduring value. At the end of the day, it smells of earned success—so Capricorn.

AQUARIUS

The visionary of the zodiac, Aquarius is a forward-thinking and intellectual sign who walks a path of unique individuality while remaining deeply connected to the collective. Their fragrance must be both classic in its beauty and modern in its execution. Enter **MAGNOLIA INFINITA**. This perfume opens with a radiant trio of Calabrian bergamot, lemon, and orange, reflecting the friendly, intellectual, and airy energy Aquarius shares with their community. The rest unfolds into a grand floral bouquet of magnolia, jasmine, and rose—not a singular note, but a collective, much like these air signs' humanitarian ideals. A modern take on a classic structure, Magnolia Infinita matches the Aquarian genius for taking the familiar and making it revolutionary. And, with a base of musk and patchouli, it easily becomes the signature scent for the sign who doesn't just predict the future, but actively creates it.

PISCES

Pisces are the zodiac's artist, dreamy and intuitive souls who swim in the deep, emotional waters of the collective imagination. Their fragrance must be a portal, an escape to a place as beautiful and boundless as their inner world. **FICO DI AMALFI**, another member of the Blu Mediterraneo La Riserva collection, is that journey, bottled. The scent evokes the entire panorama of the Amalfi Coast, from the endless blue seas that mirror these fishies' own watery depths, to the scenic peaks where lush fig trees grow in the sun. In this fragrance, figs are elevated into an olfactory art form, blending the rich sweetness of their pulp with the vibrancy of lemon (another fruit distinctive to the coast, also infused with fig here). All of it comes together to be the scent of a golden-lit daydream on the Amalfi Coast—perfect for the deeply romantic and creative Piscean spirit.





ACQUA DI PARMA

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