



Discovering the Great River : establishing a new academic model for research into the memory and identity of a region

The University of Gastronomic Sciences will travel along the Po River from the 26th September until 20th October

This year 180 students of the University of Gastronomic Sciences will travel along the Po River, from Monviso to the Adriatic, by bicycle and boat in order to raise awareness of the state of Italy's main river system. The trip will begin from September 26th and conclude on October 20th crossing 4 regions and 13 provinces, the chief objective being to test new environmental and scientific analysis and to create a new educational model.

The research of the Great River is developed and executed by the University to mark the 50th anniversary of *Travel in the Po Valley* by Mario Soldati, famed Italian journalist, filmmaker and novelist. Soldati travelled in the Po Basin, one of the world's finest and most renowned food producing regions and interviewed the people living and working within the river system. Since *Travel in the Po Valley* was first made the area has become heavily industrialised to the torment of the environment and the culture of its inhabitants.

The UNISG recognises the ecological emergency concerning fresh water, that it is the strategic resource of the future and that the survival of the great river systems of the world is a global challenge. With this in mind, an extensive environmental analysis will be executed by a scientific committee, in conjunction with Golder Associates, international specialists on earth and environmental engineering.

Students are involved in every aspect of the planning, organisation, academic activities and communication of the project. Travelling by bike and boat enables the students to gain an intimate and hands-on knowledge of the river itself. Aside from the actual travelling, the students will participate in daily classes, seminars and conferences on subjects related to the river. Locals, fishermen, workers and intellectuals will guide the students providing the opportunity for them to understand how the river works and to meditate on its health and potential resources.

Even if it is a travel along a very specific river, the University hopes it could be seen as a model, which can be readily applied to other places. A new kind of interactive, multi-disciplinary approach enabling students to be active and informed participants in one of the world's most pertinent debates.



The University of Gastronomic Sciences on a Journey Through the Po Valley

Students will Travel Along Italy's Longest River from September 26 to October 20 to Study its Culture

"Traveling through the countryside of the Po Valley it is impossible not to feel like a foreigner."
Gianni Celati, *Verso la foce*

Over the last half-century journalists, writers and film crews have been constantly travelling down the Po River, most famously Mario Soldati for RAI (the Italian state broadcaster) in 1955-56. These various journeys have had various goals: to investigate the environment, to look at the zone's production, to discover its gastronomy or to study its anthropology. Each journey produced diaries, articles, documents and films, charged with a strongly critical sense. Most of the works focused on an awareness of the decline of the societies reliant on the Po, and more particularly the economics of a zone whose fate was so closely linked to the river.

Our journey will begin on September 26, 2007, and conclude on October 20, and is unique in its nature and objectives. It will contribute to building the profile of the university and its academic program, with the student body actively participating in every step of its organization, and the students undergoing a complete immersion in the study of the river's history and geography.

Prior to the start of the journey, the river's water and silt will be scientifically analyzed, a test with stops along the way and interviews with the local people whose lives are linked to the river. The students will not be taking part in a touristic excursion. Rather they will be active members of a collective investigation into the food cultures of this great river. This will be a chance for the interdisciplinary philosophy of the University of Gastronomic Sciences to come into sharp focus.

Starting from Pian del Re, high up in the Alps, and arriving at the Comacchio lagoon on the Adriatic coast, the journey will involve 180 students from the second and third years of the degree course in Gastronomic Sciences and 20 students from the Colorno Masters, accompanied by tutors and professors. For three weeks the group will visit producers, study subjects that are part of the university's curriculum and attend seminars and conferences on the culture of the Great River and its basin.

Why a journey along the Po? This is the most ambitious of all the field trips which students participate in during their course, because of its duration, academic nature, the variety of knowledge it will encompass and the richness of foods produced and consumed along the



river's banks. From the high snowy peaks and rugged terrain down to the broad, flat plains to the marshy delta, the students will pass houses and factories, farms and fields, churches and museums, villages and cities.

This journey will bring them to the future and the past, as the travelers move with heightened senses and their thoughts tuned to the water as it appears, disappears and reappears. It will be a long journey, and the students will need to draw on all the subjects they have studied at UNISG, and many other disciplines, in order to grasp the complexities of the territory. But the pace will be slow, giving them a chance to discover products, processes and culinary traditions as they meander along the river.

At UNISG travel is a unique teaching tool, an experience which equips students with the ability to observe, organize, research and learn from peasants, fishermen, scientists and intellectuals. From stop to stop, traveling by bicycle, the journey will become a formative event in the life of every student, leading them into the future and serving as a constant source of inspiration.



In Search of the Great River

Aware of the current global water crisis, the University of Gastronomic Sciences is organizing a journey along the Po River.

The environmental emergency facing fresh water is both an Italian and an international issue. From Europe's great rivers to the Yangtze in China, the Mississippi in the United States and the Murray in Australia, there is growing concern that in addition to the environmental problems surrounding rivers, the cultural and social systems linked to them are dying out. The Po is one such river which is directly suffering from problems which are not just ecological.

The University of Gastronomic Sciences intends to study the Po River's complexity in an attempt to better understand its state of health. By teaching on the road, moving along the river's banks, students will focus on social, cultural, economic and gastronomic issues, heightened by the environmental emergency.

The university's Dean, Alberto Capatti, states: "The journey we are planning must help enrich the cultural background of our students. They are taking part in every single step of the journey's planning. We aim to educate experts in food and wine who will be able to understand the complexity of a landscape, from a historical and geographical perspective. This journey will be a collective investigation into the gastronomic culture of the Great River, based on scientific analyses of the water and silt and interviews with people who live near the river. Students will have the chance to contemplate the river's future as they pass through various regions led by farmers, fishermen, experts, intellectuals and professors. All this will be supported by an environmental study of the Po's potential resources."

The aim of this journey is to focus on how the Po was and how it is now. We intend to shed light on the unseen conflicts and social, economic and cultural contrasts. At the same time the university wishes to focus on positive values and aspects which are still thriving along the river's banks. Above all this project will serve the Po because it will provide a comprehensive report not only on its weaknesses and also its strengths, which can serve as the basis for a new future.



Journey Itinerary

Stages and Personalities

Bicycles and boats: The two forms of transport chosen to carry the travelers to the 25 different stops along the river.

The stages of the journey have been carefully considered in order to cover the whole river, visiting each town which has in a historical, cultural or gastronomic sense helped develop the Po River's culture.

The villages, towns or cities where the travelers will stop are fundamental to the logistic organization of the journey as each will contribute something unique and provide places to dine, beds to sleep in and spaces for conferences and concerts.

The journey will follow a small road as close as possible to the river, so as to keep the students near the object of their research.

During the journey's 25 days the students will also start some of their 2007/2008 courses, and attend special seminars with cultural and scientific figures: For example, Enzo Bianchi will lecture to them at the Staffarda Abbey on monasticism.

Evenings will be dedicated to grand events (with free entry) with singers, musicians, actors and comedians. Performers who have already signed up include Lella Costa, Francesco Guccini, Michele Serra, Roberto Vecchioni and Antonio Albanese.

During the 25 stages the journey will pass through four regions and 13 provinces.

Stages:

Stage 1

Pian del Re – Saluzzo

(Pian del Re - Paesana - Sanfront - Gambaasca - Martiniana Po – Saluzzo)

Stage 2

Saluzzo – Staffarda – Moretta

(Staffarda - Cardè - Moretta – Racconigi)

Stage 3

La Loggia – Moncalieri – Turin

(La Loggia - Moncalieri – Turin)

Stage 4

Turin



Stage 5

Turin – Chivasso

(Turin - San Mauro Torinese - Settimo Torinese – Brandizzo - Chivasso)

Stage 6

Chivasso – Trino Vercellese – Casale Monferrato

(Chiasso – San Sebastiano Po – Cavagnolo – Brusico - Palazzolo Vercellese - Trino Vercellese - Morano sul Po – Casale Monferrato)

Stage 7

Casale Monferrato – Valenza

(Casale Monferrato - Frassineto Po – Valmacca – Bozzolo - Valenza)

Stage 8

Valenza – Pavia

(Sannazzaro de' Burgondi - S.Martino Siccomario - Pavia)

Stage 9

Pavia

Stage 10

Pavia – San Zenone Po – Piacenza

(Pavia – Belgioioso – Spessa - San Zenone Po – Sarmato - Piacenza)

Stage 11

Piacenza

Stage 12

Piacenza – Cremona

(Piacenza - San Rocco al Porto - Mezzana Casati - Santo Stefano Lodigiano - Corno Giovine – Maleo – Pizzighettone - Crotta d'Adda - Caselle - Spinadesco - Cava Tigozzi – Cremona)

Stage 13

Cremona

Stage 14

Cremona – Fontanellato – Parma

(Cremona – Polesine Parmense – Zibello – Roccabianca – Busseto – Soragna – Sambuseto – Fontanellato)

Stage 15

Colorno

Stage 16



Parma

Stage 17

Viadana – Luzzara

(Viadana - Boretto – Pieve di Saliceto – Gualtieri – Guastalla – Luzzara)

Stage 18

Mantua

Stage 19

Mantua – San Benedetto Po

Stage 20

San Benedetto – Ferrara

(San Benedetto – Revere – Ferrara)

Stage 21

Ferrara

Stage 22

Ferrara – Adria

(Ferrara – Porto Viro – Adria)

Stage 23

Polesine

Stage 24

Polesine – Oceanographic ship

Stage 25

Adria



Preparations For the Journey Down the River Po

As the day of departure approaches, students are working to prepare an educational program

In the months leading to the start of the Discovering the Great River journey, the University of Gastronomic Sciences is organizing academic activities for its students, who have been involved in every stage of the organization for the trip.

In keeping with the multidisciplinary nature which characterizes the degree course, the students will deepen their knowledge of the historical, social and cultural context behind the Po River system. This will facilitate a complete and critical method of investigation which can be applied to the reality that will be encountered during their travels through the lands of the Po.

The scope of academic activities will be wide: University teaching staff as well as experts in various fields will take part in the preparation leading up to the trip itself, with seminars dealing with important themes like ecology, river systems, food production and the local economies.

This will be accompanied by screenings of documentaries particularly connected to the themes of the project, such as farming culture and the popular tradition made famous by Mario Soldati's landmark film 50 years ago.

Another fundamental preparation will be the gathering of testimonies from those who live in the lands touched by the Po: Through the memory of local populations, the students can deepen their knowledge of the area and the traditions which characterize life in *Pianura Padana*.

The students will be involved in all phases of organization of the trip of the Discovering the Great River journey. In this way they can directly experience the organization of a large and multi-layered cultural event, an important training which will help prepare students for their future careers.



Po Voices

Students from the University of Gastronomic Sciences collect testimonies from the people of the Po Valley

Fundamental to the wider research into the River Po and its surrounding cultures is the gathering of thoughts and observations from the people who form and guard the Great River's collective memory.

A group of students guided by the university's anthropology professor, Piercarlo Grimaldi, and followed by a film crew, have been interviewing people whose families have lived along the Po for generations. Thus they still preserve the social and cultural memory of the river civilization. This record will be an significant historical document, of a society in very real threat of extinction.

Memory is perhaps the most important record of the cultures which define Italy, and every day it is being both lost and transformed.

The aim of the project is to reveal knowledge about the river, telling stories of lives, jobs, rites and traditions which have been and which are part of the Po lands. It will be an in-depth and innovative study of the anthropological characteristics of the Great River's civilization, created out of the voices of the people who have lived their lives along the river's banks.

"A deep well of traditional knowledge linked to the River Po still exists," says Prof. Grimaldi, "and these interviews confirm how this culture is still present and alive in the memory of elders." Video recordings of these personal stories reveal how relationships with the river could be at times tempestuous and volatile. As a symbol of life and death, fertility and destruction, the river has been the gravitational center of life for all those who live around it. "Collected testimonies confirm a total consciousness of the dramatic and deep changes which have impacted the river system," says Grimaldi, "but at the same time they underline the persistence of an unbreakable cultural bond with the river which the popular world finds impossible to maintain."

The first group of interviews, recorded at Racconigi, Envie (where the river leaves the mountains), and Casale Monferrato, was shown during Slow Fish, at the University of Gastronomic Sciences stand.



The Traveling Classroom

During the journey's 25 days, five second- and third-year courses will start, in conjunction with numerous special seminars which will be held along the way.

Teaching is an integral part of the Discovering the Great River journey, with 50 hours of lectures for the second- and third-year students and 30 hours of seminars, visits and lectures from guest professors.

Second-year students will attend their first Anthropology lectures, held by Professor Piercarlo Grimaldi, and Zoology lectures, with Professor Ettore Tibaldi.

Third-years will start the academic year with three new courses: History of Gastronomy, taught by UNISG Dean Alberto Capatti; Food Technology taught by Professor Marco Riva and Aesthetics taught by Professor Nicola Perullo.

Various lectures will deal with subjects directly linked to the journey, such as local cuisine or food and wine technology covering products the students will see being made. The UNISG professors will also sometimes collaborate with external lecturers, such as Andrea Maestrelli, for fish-processing techniques, and Pier Maria Toppino, for dairy production.

The start of the 2007/2008 academic year is a crucial moment for our university, and it will be marked by a ceremony at the Farnese Theater in Parma, during the journey along the Po.

Some of the lectures (30 hours) will be dedicated to seminars and other educational issues, not necessarily strictly linked to Gastronomic Sciences but still essential to an understanding of Po culture, helping create a more complete picture of the river's society.

One of these will be held by Enzo Bianchi, prior of the Bose monastic community, together with Professor Grimaldi on September 27. The conference will be on monastic life, its role in regional gastronomy and its connections with the river.

In Cremona, known worldwide for its production of lutes, students will visit the University of Pavia's School of Music. This kind of visit is in keeping with the multidisciplinary educational philosophy of the University of Gastronomic Sciences.



Monitoring the River Po

An environmental campaign complementing the journey along the Po to discuss the health of the river.

The Scientific Committee of the Discovering the Great River project, with the support of two leading environmental research companies, has begun a study to collect data on the state of health of the River Po.

An analysis of the first results, taken from sampling stations in Piedmont and Lombardy, was first presented to the public in Genoa in May 2007 during a press conference for the launch of the project. The aim is to appraise the overall river quality through a comprehensive ecosystemic approach.

The analysis method includes both historical data, gathered from the river basin authority's database, and data from the current field studies.

The latter combines various cutting-edge monitoring techniques, enabling the tracking of both the chemical and biological quality of the water and sediments and the strength of animal biodiversity.

The novelty of this approach lies in the use of these techniques with an ecotoxicological analysis of sediments. This allows a reading of historical evidence stored in the silt.

The data collection is carried out in a systemic way throughout the river basin. The monitoring takes place at selected stations along the river, its primary tributaries and in the delta along the Adriatic coast.

Based on this data gathering and subsequent analysis it will be possible to plan a program of intervention to restore the river's environmental harmony.

The Scientific Committee which is coordinating the monitoring is composed of:

- Prof. Ezio Pelizzetti, Rector of the University of Turin
- Prof. Silvano Focardi, Rector of the University of Siena
- Prof. Pier Francesco Ghetti, Rector of the University of Venice
- Prof. Silvestro Greco, Senior Scientist at ICRAM. Committee Spokesman

The monitoring activity is carried in collaboration with Roberto Mezzalama on behalf of Golder Associates and Giovanni Torchia on behalf of Società Cooperativa Nautilus.



The University of Gastronomic Sciences

The University of Gastronomic Sciences is a unique academic institution born from the idea of creating professionals in the field of gastronomy.

Founded by Slow Food, with the collaboration of the region of Piedmont and Emilia-Romagna in 2004. It allows students from EU and Non-EU countries to come in close contact with every facet of food and wine production.

The university offers a multidisciplinary approach with subjects from the fields of humanities and sciences. The academic course matter is made up of 30 different disciplines. The subjects are taught with a unique integration of theoretical lessons, practical experiences, laboratory activities and stages. Students are trained to become experts in sensory analysis and understand the interaction between the composition of food and its taste profile. Other areas like botany, viticulture, anthropology, chemistry, history and food law help to piece together the greater picture.

A point-of-difference of the University of Gastronomic Science is its stages, trips taken by small groups to learn intensively about a particular region or product. Organized to fill the gap between what is learnt in the classroom and what happens in the field, the stages are in Italy and abroad.

Broadly they are split into two style of stage. The thematic stages are focused on traditional Italian products and production methods. Examples of these include pasta, rice, cured meats and organic agriculture.

The territorial stage are organized to afford students the opportunity to appreciate and learn about the products and culture of a visited region like Japan, Kenya, Australia, Ireland, Spain etc.

UNISG has the goal to prepare graduates that have wide and complete knowledge and that are able to work internationally and locally in the fields of management or communication.

A new kind of professional is born, the gastronomer. That fits into the working world with a solid cultural basis with a multi-disciplinary knowledge of consumption and direct and personal experience of products and production.



Trucks and
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In 1975, the Fiat Group founded Iveco by merging the five leading European brands of industrial vehicles. Over the thirty years that followed, while expanding its corporate structure through international acquisitions and joint ventures, Iveco consistently pursued its global and multi-cultural vocation. Currently, the Company is one of the worldwide leaders in road transport: Iveco maintains 27 facilities throughout the five continents and 6 major research and development centres, across 16 countries. It has over 4,600 dealers and service centres throughout the world.

Iveco designs, manufactures and markets a wide range of light (2.8 – 6.0 tons GVW), medium (6.1 – 15.9 tons GVW) and heavy (over 16 tons GVW) industrial vehicles for on road and off road use. It also produces passenger transport vehicles and special vehicles for defence, civil protection and other special missions, such as fire fighting. The vehicles utilize the most advanced diesel and alternative fuel technologies such as compressed natural gas, in addition to hybrid and fuel cell technologies.

The Iveco mandate for environmental care is also mirrored by the product range marketed with the brand Irisbus, the Iveco company for urban and tourist passenger transport, which sponsors the initiative "alla ricerca del Grande fiume" by contributing a number of vehicles powered by compressed natural gas engines. This technology ensures ultra-low emissions, and secures compliance with the EEV (Environmentally-friendly Enhanced Vehicle) standard as per the European Directive 2005/55/EC.



E-MOTION collaborates with the University of Gastronomic Sciences on the 'In Search of the Great River' Project. The partnership with Slow Food continues.

The innovative technology of the Turin company adopts the quality philosophy of Slow living, and supports the "In search of the Great River" Project: 180 students of the University of Gastronomic Sciences, on a journey to discover the memory and identity of the river, will receive TomTom satellite navigators, HTC smartphones and other high-tech products.

E-MOTION takes a journey along the Po river with the **University of Gastronomic Sciences**, an international training and research centre promoted by **Slow Food** in collaboration with the Regional Governments of Piedmont and Emilia Romagna. 180 students, on an educational journey from Piedmont to the Po delta, will be provided with E-MOTION's top quality, high-tech products, to assist in their didactic activities of observing, documenting, photographing, organising and analysing. All by bicycle.

The aim of the trip is to provide gastronomic sciences with an interdisciplinary study area and an example of itinerant training, and to attract the attention of the local population, prompting people to uphold the rights of the river.

TomTom satellite navigators, HTC smartphones and other high-tech products will accompany the students on their long journey, upholding the E-MOTION philosophy and in perfect agreement with the Slow philosophy of the movement from Piedmont that has travelled all round the world, even inspiring the University world: technology that is innovative but simple, easy to use, which does not cause stress but makes time for life.

The attention that E-MOTION pays to the quality and efficiency of its products reflects its policy of respecting life in general. Pleasure in the quality of what they produce, and attention paid to the world around us, are the common points shared by the partnership between E-MOTION and the University, and Slow Food in general: a form of collaboration that considers progress as the right to pleasure.

E-MOTION's participation as a technical sponsor of **Slow Fish** should be seen in this context

As Filippo Bellotti, Chairman of the Turin firm, explained, "*E-MOTION supports Slow Food and the University of Gastronomic Sciences as an economic entity that believes in promoting respect for the environment, traditions and cultural identities, in rediscovering the pleasure of living slowly through the use of high-tech assets destined to a network of people who meet to exchange experiences and ideas, and who try out every aspect of life.*"

The "In search of the Great River" project is the first venture between E-MOTION and the University of Gastronomic Sciences, in the context of a technical and project partnership with Slow Food, begun when the firm sponsored Cheese 2005 and the 2006 Salone del Gusto, which developed into an agreement to support all the initiatives of the movement chaired by Carlo Petrini in 2007.

E-MOTION

E-MOTION SpA is a specialist distributor of smartphones, PDAs, satellite navigation systems, electronic products and accessories for mobility. Over the years, E-MOTION has earned a leading position in the Italian mobility market and since 2006 it has been involved in the Italian "Synergy with Businessmen" closed Fund founded by Gianfilippo Cuneo. E-MOTION distributes products by world leaders such as Apple, HTC, lovemytime, Nokia, Palm and TomTom in Italy.

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GERMANETTI is glad to join the University of Gastronomic Science in The Journey Along the Po project, to rediscover the Po river and lands, to which the history and works of GERMANETTI is so tightly linked.