

Cru Caviar’s Ferrari tells of 25-year Beluga harvest time

Posted on November 2, 2026 by Rosy Sandri

GOITO, Lombardy — A family that raised dairy cows until the 1970s now farms beluga sturgeon, a fish once native to the Mincio and Po rivers, and waits up to 25 years for its caviar.

Serena Ferrari, who oversees guided tours at Cru Caviar, a sturgeon farm near Mantua, Lombardy, explains the wait. The company was among the sponsors of In City Golf, a tournament played through the historic centre of Verona on October 3, 2026, and partnered Tennis in Pentola, a charity tennis tournament for chefs in Rome, in May.

It also makes a Christmas panettone (a traditional sweet bread) with caviar and dark chocolate alongside Pasticceria Antoniazzi, a bakery in Bagnolo San Vito, Lombardy.

Source: https://italynow.co.uk/cru-caviars-ferrari-tells-of-25-year-beluga-harvest-time/



Sturgeon at the farm (*Credits: Cru Caviar*)

How did a dairy farm become a fish farm?

The Bettinazzi family has always lived in that area. In the 1970s they decided to change the type of farming. Having a spring on the farm, they tried putting a few trout in. Within a very short time the trout multiplied, and the business became more interesting than dairy cows.

Why add sturgeon to a trout farm?

By the mid 1990s, over those 20 years, the climate had changed radically. Water temperatures rose. The trout, which live in fresh water, began to suffer, so the family decided to add a stronger fish, the sturgeon.

How long do they live, and why the sturgeon?

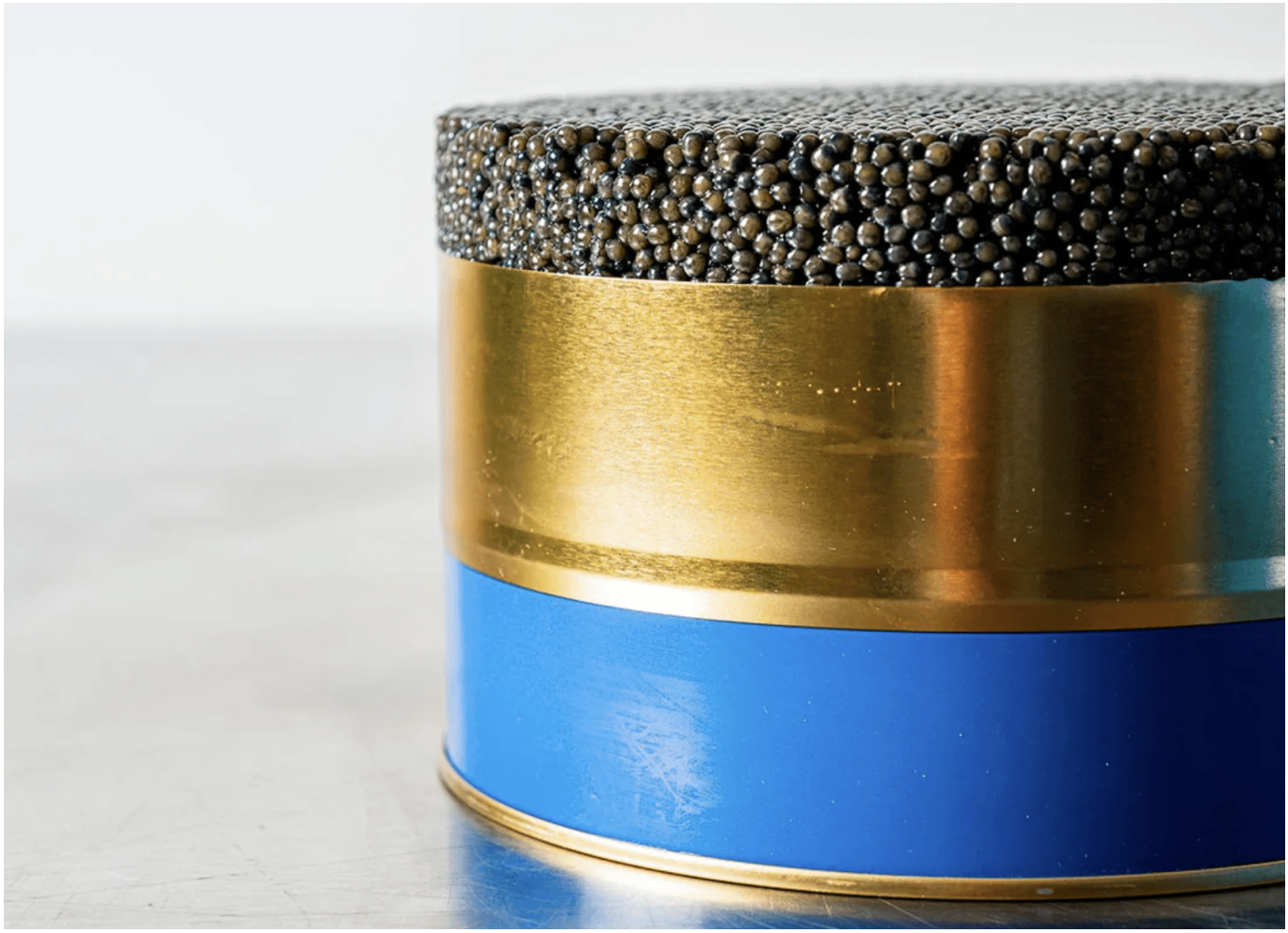
In nature they can reach 100 years. On a farm, clearly not, because otherwise we wouldn’t be able to make caviar. The sturgeon is an indigenous fish. In our rivers, the Mincio and the Po, and in the lakes of Mantua, they swam freely. There were three species, but the most important and best known is the beluga, which is from our area.

Which sturgeon produces caviar first, and which last?

The earliest is the Siberian sturgeon, which produces caviar at around 10 years. Then come the Russian sturgeon and the white sturgeon, at around 12 to 15 years. Last is the beluga, which you don’t touch before 20 years. Usually you get to 23 to 25 years. It is the most expensive and most prized, and the one that makes us wait the longest.

How is the caviar taken, and what happens to the rest of the fish?

To extract the caviar, the fish is sacrificed. The eggs and the meat, which is very good, are used, and so is the cartilage. It also goes to the cosmetics industry, and to the pharmaceutical industry for omega 3.



Caviar tin (*Credits: Cru Caviar*)

Where is the caviar sold?

Mostly abroad. In Italy not very much, because there is no caviar culture. It is not a traditional product.

The farm **says Mantua's ruling Gonzaga family ate beluga. Was that caviar?**

It wasn't caviar, it was sturgeon eggs. Caviar is salted sturgeon eggs.



Sturgeon tanks from above (*Credits: Cru Caviar*)

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