



Italy elite draw up growth recipe at food forum

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MANDURIA, Apulia — Italy's top food, wine, and agriculture figures met in Apulia this weekend and drew up a recipe for growth, committing to invest in quality, back young producers, and cut bureaucracy to capitalise on Italy's newly awarded UNESCO culinary heritage status.

The *Forum della Cucina Italiana* (Italian Food Forum), organised by veteran Italian journalist and television presenter Bruno Vespa with Italian export agency ICE and public affairs consultancy Comin & Partners and held 29 and 30 March at Masseria Li Reni in Manduria, Apulia, opened with a striking set of data. A Deloitte study put the global value of Italian cuisine at 251 billion euro, with 300 billion within reach if recent growth rates hold. Agri-food exports already hit a record 71 billion euro in 2025, up 5.2 percent on 2024, Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani said, with total Italian exports reaching 643 billion euro and a government target of 700 billion by end of 2027.

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