



# What It's Like to Visit FICO Eataly World

The Italian agri-food park has everything from goats to pasta factories to Bianchi bicycles

BY DEVORAH LEV-TOV  
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Photo: Eataly

**F**ICO Eataly World, the world's largest agri-food park (more on exactly what that is later), **finally opened** on November 15, 2017. By March 15, 2018, the park reached one million visitors. People have ventured from 30 countries, including more than 16,000 students and almost 100,000 visitors from the food industry. But what are all these people doing on the 10 hectares of land in Bologna, Italy? We speak to Tiziana Primori, CEO of FICO Eataly World, to find out.

"Our mission is to help people understand Italian food," she says. "Italy is **rich with flavor**, but its flavors are not complicated." FICO Eataly brings together food from Italy's 20 regions in one (gigantic) place. But Eataly is about more than just happily stuffing your face—it's about learning where that food comes from. Visitors can see those animals, fields, gardens and orchards without having to travel across the country. They can observe how it all gets harvested, how it gets prepared and how it gets eaten.

"The most extraordinary thing is the behavior of families. It's like coming to the countryside, where everyone feels free," Primori says. "Everything is there: producers, farmers, animals . . . but they are in a safe place. And they can disconnect a little bit from their phones and learn about real stuff."



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FICO Eataly World

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FICO Eataly has two hectares of fields and stables; 40 factories displaying the production of food and drink like pasta, bread, oil, wine and beer; and 45 restaurants and kiosks serving the resulting goods.

"This is where you can find the truth behind Italian food," Primori says. "Why we choose this grain, that lemon, **this rice**. In Italy, the biodiversity is incredible. You can learn with your eyes, with your smell and with your taste."

One of Primori's favorite things about the park are the animals. There are more than 200 cows, goats, sheep, pigs, rabbits, geese, horses, donkeys and hens. Seven calves and lambs have already been born since FICO Eataly opened. A tip from Primori: The animals get fed at 9 a.m., so be sure to be inside the park by then to witness the feeding. "When they hear the food cart, they all come running," she laughs.

There are also olive groves, herb gardens, vegetable gardens, grain fields (including barley, hops, hemp and wheat), fruit and citrus orchards, truffle grounds, vineyards, and greenhouses. When you arrive, there is a wall made of apples. "It's actually made up of all of the different types of apples that grow in Italy," Primori shares.

After exploring how things grow, guests (who ride around the park on three-wheeled Bianchi bicycles) can visit the accompanying factories to see how the sausage gets made (literally; January's theme was sausage, and the park explored more than 50 types of Italian sausage). Aside from meat production (there are separate prosciutto and mortadella factories), there are also factories devoted to Grana Padano and **Parmigiano-Reggiano production**; flour, rice and stone mills; a pasta factory; a fishmonger; a Sicilian pastry shop; and a brewery and a winery. There's even a factory devoted to sauces.



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1 MONTH AGO



"I love the factories, because there are a lot of young people working there that are discovering what a job can be. It's almost like a nostalgic idea of working in a factory but within the present," Primori says. "For example, in the pasta factory, the girls are making pasta in front of you. You see the spaghetti they're making, and then you can go to the Pasta Restaurant and eat it."

About those restaurants: You could eat pasta from Abruzzo, drink wine from Veneto and [sample gelato](#) from Florence, all in one day. Primori's favorite is La Locanda Dell'Uovo, devoted to eggs (which come from the laying hens a few acres away). But she loves them all.

"I love the smells. Every step that you take, from beer to wine to meat to cheese to pasta, every step is a new smell," Primori says.

Throughout 2018, FICO will continue to change with the seasons, offering monthly promotions related to the trades and traditions of Italian food production. The month of April will be dedicated to vegetables and farmers, with an artichoke festival on April 25. May will be dedicated to flowers and gardeners; June to bakers, bread and pasta; and July to fruits and fruit producers. In August, they will celebrate pizzaioli and the tomato, and September will be devoted to wine and vine growers. October is dedicated to beers and brewers, November to chefs and the kitchen, and December to craftsmanship and Christmas markets.

"Even though FICO Eataly is huge, it's actually very small compared to all that Italy has to offer," Primori says. "It's just a taste of Italy."

*Devorah Lev-Tov is a contributing writer for Tasting Table who travels the globe—and traverses NYC block by block—in search of her next amazing meal. See her latest adventures on her Instagram at [@devoltv](#).*