



For **Release**: Immediate, May 1, 2023  
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## **Senator Borrello Announces Emmy Award-Winning Celebrity Chef Lidia Bastianich to be an Honoree of 2023 Italian-American Day in Albany**

*May 22 event to feature the popular Festa Italiana and return of the Mulberry Street Fair*

**ALBANY** – Senator George Borrello, President of the Conference of Italian-American State Legislators, has announced that celebrity chef Lidia Bastianich, the Emmy award-winning public television host, best-selling author and restaurateur, will be a 2023 Italian-American of the Year honoree for this year’s Italian-American Day on Monday, May 22. The annual event celebrating Italian heritage and culture is one of the most popular legislative events in Albany.

In announcing Lidia Bastianich’s participation, Senator Borrello emphasized her role in keeping alive the traditions and cuisine of Italy through her long-running cooking shows on public television, best-selling cookbooks and restaurants, including Eataly, the largest Italian marketplace in the world.

“We are very excited that beloved chef and food personality Lidia Bastianich will join us as this year’s honoree for our Italian-American Day events. With approximately three million residents of Italian heritage – the most of any state in the nation – the history and culture of New York State has been immeasurably enriched by the contributions of Italian Americans,” said Senator Borrello. “One of the greatest aspects of that legacy is Italian food and cuisine. Through all her many culinary endeavors, Lidia has helped sustain and enrich America’s love of Italian food and reminded people that sharing a meal is an important point of connection for families, friends and neighbors.”

Senator Borrello noted that the Mulberry Street Fair celebration in the Well of the Legislative Office Building will return this year after a three-year absence. The free event, which takes its name from the famous street in Manhattan’s Little Italy, is a festive celebration of Italian culture and features food and specialties from local vendors, music, and scholarship presentations to four college-bound young people. The scholarship applications, from young people residing in the districts of Conference members, are reviewed by a panel of scholars from the John D. Calandra Italian American Institute who choose the recipients.

The day culminates with the “Festa Italiana” at the Italian Community Center in Troy, New York. The primary fundraiser for the Conference, the event features authentic Italian cuisine and live music. Honored at the event will be Lidia Bastianich as well as this year’s legislative honorees, Senator Peter Harckham and Assemblyman Al Stirpe. Tickets to Festa are \$100 and are available by contacting Sarah Killeen in the Office of Assemblyman Ed Ra, 444 NYS Capitol, (518) 455-4627.

“Italian-American Day is a wonderful tradition that has endured for decades here in the Legislature. Our events are a great opportunity to gather with colleagues and friends, celebrate Italian food and culture and honor special individuals whose contributions have enriched the Italian-American legacy in New York. I am already looking forward to May 22 and encourage my fellow legislators to make plans now to join us for the festivities,” said Senator Borrello.

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Lidia Matticchio Bastianich  
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