

## Yummy Italian Desserts

Yummy Italian Desserts Dessert is that part of the meal that comes at the end. It usually consists of sweet food, but sometimes strongly flavored food items like cheeses can be served as well. There are different opinions as to what is the correct term for this part of the meal. While the Americans, Australians, Canadians, Irish and some others use the word dessert, the British and people from some commonwealth countries, including India, use the words sweet, pudding or afters. The word dessert comes from the old French word &ldquo;desservir&rdquo;, meaning to clean the table, and includes cakes, cookies, pastries, candies and ice cream. According to Debrett&rsquo;s, pudding is the correct term, sweet is a term of common usage while the word dessert can be used only if this course consists of fruits. These terms have a class underpinning as well &ndash; pudding being the word used by upper classes and the upper middle class while dessert, sweets and afters is used by the rest. However dessert is the most widely used word. Desserts acquired popularity after the rise of the middle class in the nineteenth century when the mechanization of the sugar production made sugar cheaper and it ceased to be a privilege enjoyed by the upper classes. Italian desserts range from slightly bitter to sweet but are not excessively sweet and are served best with wine. Apart from this, many Italians prefer fresh fruit after a meal. Cookies and Biscotti come in many sizes, shapes and flavors. Most Italian cookies are sweet but not too sweet, are flavored with nuts, light glazes or candied fruits. However some cookies are bitter. Like biscotti, most cookies are served with wine. Biscotti are baked twice to make them hard and remove moisture giving them a distinctive dry and crumbly texture. Traditional Italian sweetbreads include Panforte, Pandoro and Panettone. Panforte is the &ldquo;strong bread&rdquo; of Siena, and is a dense mix of almond candied fruit sweetened with honey and spices. Panettone is the most famous of the Italian cakes and use acidic dough and a multi day &ldquo;proof&rdquo; to give it the distinctive fluffiness and dome shape. The bread is flavored with bits of candied fruits and raisins. Pandoro has a distinctive star shape and is made from white flour, sweetened with honey and flavored with eggs, butter and sugar. Custard style desserts include Tiramisu, Zabaglione and Zuppa Inglese. Tiramisu is the most popular dessert in Italy, excluding Gelato, containing lady finger cookies, espresso, liquor, eggs, cocoa and mascarpone cheese and is made in a layered texture. Zabaglione is made from egg yolks, sugar and dessert wine and is regarded as the native of Veneto. Zuppa Inglese consists of layers of sponge cake and custard or cream. The dessert has an outlandish name and is the English parallel of English Trifle. Desserts from Southern part of Italy include Cannoli, Cassata alla Siciliana and Zeppole. Cannoli is the most famous of Sicilian desserts and is made by filling a hollow pastry shell with sweetened, or fresh, ricotta. Candied fruit, chocolate pieces and chopped pistachios are added to add flavor.