



Were You Always an Italian?: Ancestors and Other Icons of Italian America

Maria Laurino

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"One of the best books about the immigrant experience in America....unique and gracefully written."—*San Francisco Chronicle*

Maria Laurino sifts through the stereotypes bedeviling Italian Americans to deliver a penetrating and hilarious examination of third-generation ethnic identity. With "intelligence and honesty" (*Arizona Republic*), she writes about *guidos*, *bimbettes*, and *mammoni* (mama's boys in Italy); examines the clashing aesthetics of Giorgio Armani and Gianni Versace; and unravels the etymology of southern Italian dialect words like *gavone* and *bubidabetz*. According to Frances Mayes, she navigates the conflicting forces of ethnicity "with humor and wisdom."

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