



MEDIEVAL 'WINE WINDOWS' USED IN RESTAURANTS IN ITALY TO MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCING

Tradition dates back to the plague

Olivia Petter | @oliviapetter1 | Sunday 9 August 2020 12:58 |



A number of restaurants in Florence, Italy has revived a tradition that dates back to the bubonic plague: wine windows.

The measure has been implemented at various eateries, including Osteria Delle Brache, in order to ensure that drinks can be served while maintaining social distancing.

And it's not just wine that the restaurants serve through the window; it also offers coffee, ice cream and Aperol Spritz cocktails.



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According to Florentine scholar Francesco Rondinelli, wine windows were popular in the 1600s in Florence.

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During the plague, wine producers would pass the flask of wine through the window to customers in order to prevent contagion.

As for payment, they would pass a metal



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During the plague, wine producers would pass the flask of wine through the window to customers in order to prevent contagion.

As for payment, they would pass a metal pallet to the customer, who would fill it with coins, and then the wine producer would disinfect them with vinegar before collecting them.

The **Wine Window Association** writes: “Today, during our period of Covid-19 pandemic lockdown, the owners of the wine window in Via dell’Isola delle Stinche at the Vivoli ice cream parlor in Florence have reactivated their window for dispensing coffee and ice cream, although not wine.

“Two other nearby wine windows, that of the Osteria delle Brache in Piazza Peruzzi and that of Babae in Piazza Santo Spirito, have taken us back in time by being used for their original purpose—socially-distant wine selling.”


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Osteria Delle Brache

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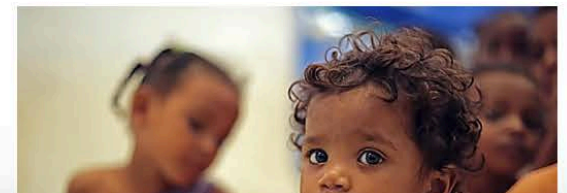
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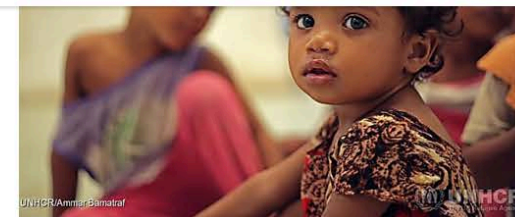
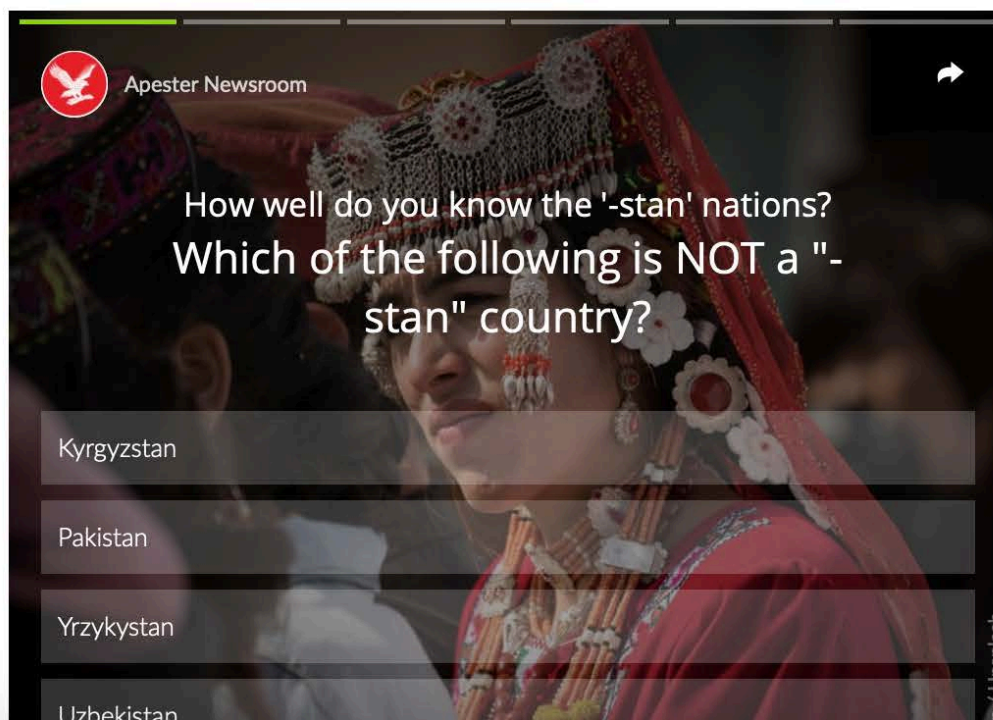
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The organisation also notes that the oldest description of the use of wine windows in Florence in a book published in 1634, as reported in the Italian newspaper *La Repubblica*.



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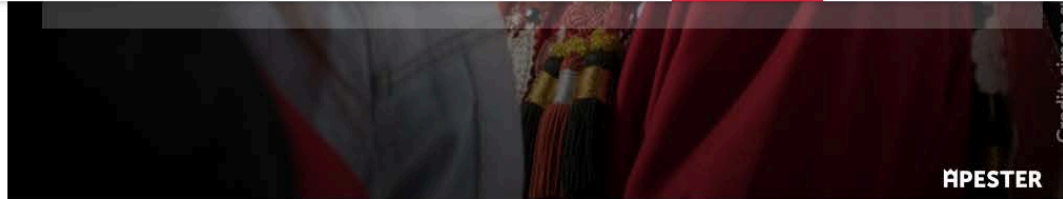
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“The description describes one of the most recent periods of The Plague in the city, which had afflicted European populations for centuries,” it adds.

“Florence’s wine windows turned out to be useful anticontagion devices for selling wine.”

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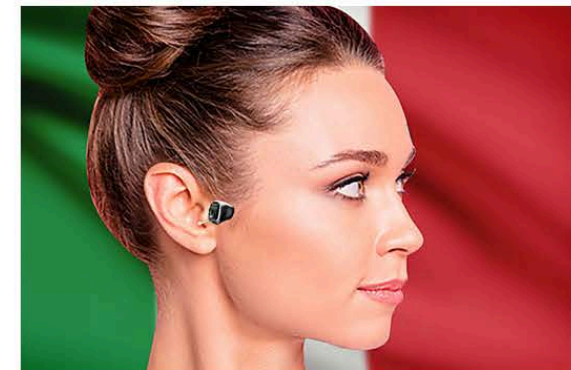
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