

## Italian Hazelnuts

Written by Administrator  
Monday, 13 June 2011 07:21

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The IGP Piedmont Hazelnuts come from hazel trees of the variety “Tonda Gentile Trilobata”. Production is mostly distributed in the provinces of Asti, Alessandria and Cuneo, in a territory delimited by the hills of Monferrato, Langhe and Roero. Recently, Piedmont hazelnuts have been awarded with I.G.P. denomination, in order to guarantee quality standards and production authenticity.

Piedmont IGP Hazelnuts are very appreciated by connoisseurs and by specialized industry and are considered the best in the world.

Several quality parameters distinguish Piedmont Hazelnuts, in particular: regular and perfectly spherical fruit, strong taste and excellent aroma after roasting, maximum ease of peeling, very long shelf life.

Nowadays the production of Piedmont is near 150,000 quintals, and represents about 8/9% of national production.

Of course, in Piedmont it is almost entirely absorbed by confectionery, where is used to produce many specialities typical of the territory. The “Tonda Gentile” hazelnut, however, performs its best in union with chocolate, since a farsighted chocolate maker in Turin divined the potential of these hazelnuts and created the first recipe of “Gianduja” chocolate. To be honest, he made a virtue of necessity, because at that time the raw material for chocolate, cocoa, was very difficult to find because the French army was besieging the city of Turin.

Hazelnuts, moreover, constitute an important resource for feeding and an important contribute to the art of good eating. In fact, they contain essential amino acids, vitamin E and lipids, consisting of over 40% acid mono unsaturated fat. The effects on man can be synthesized as anti-oxidant and regulator of cholesterol.

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Besides the universally known gianduja chocolate, many specialities are obtained from hazelnuts. We could mention hazelnut cream, hazelnuts with honey, "torrone" nougat, hazelnut nougat and many more, but now we are particularly pleased to tell you the following recipe, very simple and typical of the territory:

### **Hazelnut cake ..... without flour!!**

Is a very soft cake, with a moist heart. It can be eaten as it is, or you can garnish it with hot chocolate or "zabaione" sauce.

#### INGREDIENTS:

200 g. roasted and minced hazelnuts

200 g. sugar

4 eggs

Whip egg yolks with sugar, add minced hazelnuts and stir. Whip egg whites and add gently to the compound, mixing with upwards movements. Pour out into a 24 cm. cake mould, previously buttered and floured, and put into warm oven at 180° C. for 30/35 minutes

ENJOY !!