

An attractive one-piece walnut façade leads us into this café, the emblem of Chivasso's industriousness. The Caffè Pasticceria Bonfante was founded in 1922 with the joining of the Caffè Piatti of 1896 to the adjacent establishment. A complete renovation of the interior and exterior of the new café resulted in the uniformity of its style. The *nocciolini*, which had already been a successful confectionery product, remained the most famous speciality of the pastry shop.

ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL NOTES

The café originated on Strada Statale 11. It has always had a two-fold calling. Firstly, the café served as the main meeting place for the citizens of Chivasso. It hosted the Gran Galà sponsored by the newspaper *La Gazzetta di Chivasso* in 1952 and took part in soccer tournaments among café-sponsored teams. Secondly, the café addressed outsiders who were traveling between Turin and Milan. Before the 1920s the café could already be spotted for its large sheet-metal sign, easily seen from a distance. From 1950 up to the time that the present super-highway bypass was constructed, people from Milan who travelled to the Canavese Valley or Valle d'Aosta had to pass through Chivasso. Here they found a small shop with a still existing wooden sign. This is the way that *nocciolini* spread, even outside of Piedmont.

The interior furnishings date from 1922. There are two counters – one for the bar and the other for the pastry shop with a tall *boiserie* with shelves and mirrors. The decoration is of wood with red Verona marble panels. The only friezes that are left consist in some fruit-shaped lozenges on a panel behind the bar counter. The most valuable items in the café are the great mirrors from the 1940s made by Albano Macario, with their advertisements for the little sweet pills – *Pastiglie Leone* – and Martinazzi liqueurs.

Albano Macario, who is listed in the guidebooks of Turin beginning with 1891, changed the name of his company in 1912 into "an establishment for the production of artistic mirrors and windows, glass pastes and all kinds of crystal." There is another historically and documentarily important mirror located right at the entrance. It holds an advertisement for cookies – *Biscotti Delta*. The mirror was made by Jacopo Franco of the "Mirror and Crystal Factory and Shop," who worked in Turin from the 1920s to the 1940s.

The stuccowork on the ceiling is original, but the tables, seats, and chandeliers date back to the extensive renovation of the café in 1976, when all the flooring was replaced as well as the outside baseboard of the façade.

PRODUCTION

In 1904 Ernesto Nazzaro registered the trademark *Noasetti* for his workshop. From that time on, *nocciolini* spread all over Italy and were exported even to Japan, thanks to the business acumen of Luigi Bonfante.

The preparation of *nocciolini* is simple and its ingredients are high quality – egg whites, sugar, and hazelnuts. In the beginning, the *nocciolini* were packaged in tin cans. Franco Ortalda, a descendant of Bonfante, still has an excellent example of one from 1922 designed by the Piatti firm. The can shows off the medals that the firm won at the Marseilles International Exposition of 1905.