

ADLER: CONSTANTLY RENEWING THE GELATERIA TRADITION

FROM BOLOGNA TO CATTOLICA, A SWEET JOURNEY IN SIX STOPS FOR ADLER MERLI.

Right at the time when **Adler Merli** began taking the first steps along the journey of his fulfilling life as a gelato maker, an episode of Star Trek featuring the first interracial kiss was being aired on television in the United States. It was 1968. In 2009, Adler opened his latest gelateria in Cattolica (*the sixth*) in the same year in which the first African-American president was elected in the USA. These are coincidences that leave their mark in history, even for gelato.

It all began back in 1968 at the da Oliviero kiosk of Porta Saragozza, in a city that is one of the **best candidates for the title of the Capital of Gelato**: Bologna. Just to draw a parallel, it would be like teaching English literature at Oxford or Cambridge. Seven years later, in 1975, Adler Merli opened his first gelateria in Bologna at the Bar Bologna in Porta San Vitale. After another seven years, the gelato maker moved to Riccione's seafront in Romagna, where he managed a gelateria called Mario di Bologna. In the same year that Bearzot's Italy won the third soccer world cup, Adler was awarded a gold medal for the best gelato of the summer of 1982 in Rome, coming first out of four-hundred finalists. Once again, a pleasant coincidence. During that same period, he inaugurated his Caffè Diana in Ancona. In 1988, Adler Merli moved into the shop that was to be his home for the longest period of time: gelateria Adler of viale Dante in Riccione, where he remained for 21 years to be precise. It is here that his fame became consolidated and his gelateria became a point of reference for the city. As Adler stated, "In Riccione, during particularly intense periods, we handed out up to 3000 cones and produced eleven quintals of gelato in a day. You can say that we were the first to offer a choice of forty flavours, giving rise to the takeaway gelato trend at the time. Flavours such as ricotta stregata, bacio, gianduia, pineapple, melon, and blueberry were a novelty then.

On Saturday 19 December 2009, "**Adler caffetteria, gelateria, cremeria**" was launched and Mr. Merli began his sixth life as a gelato maker, moving a few kilometres further south to the city of flowers and of the "Regina" (*Queen*): Cattolica. He manages the shop together with his wife,

DATA SUMMARY

Name

ADLER - Gelateria Cremeria Caffetteria

Project

Sinventa

Implementation

Sinventa

Year

2009

Indoor surface

300 sq meters

Outdoor surface

150 sq meters

Location

Cattolica (RN)

IFI's Products

Cubika gelato and 4 Seasons display cases, ventilated pozzetti, bar counter





Silvana (*who has remained at his side, just like she always has, every step of the way on their common journey through life*), his friend, Elso Tentoni (*the true promoter of this new adventure*), and Fabio Fabbri (*current owner of gelateria Adler in Riccione, who will continue to carry on the tradition*). Located in a very central spot in piazza Nettuno, the gelateria is found where the legendary Bar Nettuno used to be.

“So much time has passed,” says Adler Merli, “since I started my lengthy journey in the world of gelato. Today, I am 59 years old. The nice thing is that, as time has gone by, my experience and drive has increased, while my willingness to make sacrifices in order to create something new with my wife Silvana, and capable partners such as Elso Tentoni and Fabio Fabbri, has remained intact. Cattolica is a small town that boasts an important gelato and pastry-making tradition. We are truly happy to be able to work in a profession which, first and foremost, has been the passion of our lives.”

The shop boasts an indoor area of over 300 m², complete with a ground floor and a mezzanine. Moreover, it has a further 150 m² of outdoor space. Seating approximately 300, the gelateria has been realised by Gianluca Sanchi of Studio Sinventa, who has enjoyed a meteoric rise not just in Romagna, but in the rest of Italy as well as abroad.

“Right from the start,” says Gianluca Sanchi, “Adler has taken an active part in the design of his shop, centimetre by centimetre.” Reasonably enough, he wanted to give both his gelato and all his creations the visibility they deserve. With almost eight linear metres of display cases inside the shop, this has been amply demonstrated. Just think, in total, all five display cases in the display area can contain seventy-four standard, professional pans of gelato flavours. These

become a few less, when dealing with Adler’s oversized pans. All five display cases are of the **IFI Cubika** model. In half a century of history, this company represents the culture of Italian design applied to refrigeration technology. It is normal for Adler to want to preserve and show off his creations in the best possible manner. A display case has been devoted to fresh fruit and premium quality yoghurt, which is served with a ladle. It belongs to the **4 Seasons** line, and is equipped with a technology that can make the display case move from gelato case (-14°C -18°C) to pastry/snack (+2°C +8°C, with at least 70% of relative humidity), simply by activating the switch – a useful feature as you can adapt your goods to meet different situations as well as specific work flows. Another Cubika is used exclusively for granitas. Of the remaining three, one has been configured for cream-based gelato and two for fruit gelato with large pans. In addition to these, IFI pozzetti will also be used to store iced milk for milkshakes.

“I am really pleased about IFI’s display cases,” says Adler. “I spent more than forty years continuously trying to perfect my gelato and my service. In this respect, I think that Cubika display cases are precisely what I needed. They are very aesthetically pleasing and offer optimum product visibility. Moreover, they store gelato in an exceptional manner and are extremely comfortable to use. Lastly, I would like to thank Sinventa and IFI for their availability as well as for their ability to discover brilliant solutions, even in emergency situations”.

A vertical batch freezer has been placed on display next to the entrance, since this striking machine provides an instant reminder of the age-old Italian tradition of quality gelato. Dedication to gelato, care over each detail as well as over choreographical issues, and transparency for customers

are all exalted by the area behind the counter, which is completely open to view and has been set aside for gelato servings. Approximately twenty meters square in size, the area is used exclusively to prepare fruit and gelato servings, which are enjoyed at the tables. Another place that is completely open to view is found on via Bruno, nearby. It is Adler's workshop, with its two vertical and two horizontal batch freezers, three pasteurisers, and all of the other equipment required to make the gelato that has rendered him famous, so that people can stop outside and watch how his gelato is made. The decision to allow passersby a look into his workshop says a great deal about how Adler works, as well as about his hygiene and his transparency.



On entering the shop, you feel as if you are walking onto a candid, stylised road full of trees, whose snow-white branches frame the sides of a corridor leading up to the sky. Of the materials used for the decorations, special mention must be made of the whitened, brushed natural wood of the counter and the milk-white resin floor. The gelato display cases are positioned on the left, while the bar-cafeteria area is found in front of the entrance. Once again, **all of the technology used in the bar area is provided by IFI**. The L-shaped counter has a display case on the front that is approximately 4 metres in size and houses both sweet and savoury pastries. It stands out because of its thick veneer panels in various cuts of whitened, brushed, glossy oak, while the burnished steel plinth with a LED light distinguishes itself for its discernible elegance. Moreover, the countertop in the cocktail area is made of white quartz. At the back, a six metre tall bottle holder brings to mind the stylised shapes of the trees at the entrance".



The lounge area in the mezzanine is particularly sophisticated. Its elegant glass balustrade offers a view of the shop and makes it the ideal spot for business meetings as well as for parties, in addition to the perfect place to enjoy a pleasant moment of peace. And that is not all: there is a shop inside a shop. A crepe counter is found on the side that borders via Mancini and has been designed to serve both shoppers out to enjoy one of the most renowned shopping roads in the city and the tables inside.

So, if you are ever in Romagna - between a day out at the beach, a moto GP, and a piadina - do not miss out on the chance to taste designer gelato at Adler's in Cattolica!