



Intercultural Library Ricciogiramondo in Lugano

Narrative kitchen – Cuciniamo insieme (Cooking together)

The *Ricciogiramondo* Association in Lugano offers activities, projects and courses for migrants and locals with the aim of creating encounters and promoting integration. The project *Narrative kitchen*, in which locals and immigrants participate, pursues precisely these goals.

As part of the project, women meet once a month to cook and eat together. Each time, one or more of the participants present a dish from their country of origin, prepares it in front of the others and tells stories from their country. This allows the exchange on a topic that is beloved by all participants – the kitchen. Cooking is an activity that most women have acquired in their childhood and youth and that they still practice regularly. When cooking in front of a group of other women, means to recall memories of smell (about the scents of the dish being cooked) and the sense of taste (through eating together with the children at the end) and being able to share with the others. Their own cuisine is often an occasion of pride and focusing on one's own cooking skills and related stories enhance the women's self-esteem. Cooking together also combines the memory of their region of origin with the Italian language - the language of integration - in which the memories are passed on.

The meetings take place in the intercultural library *Ricciogiramondo*, which is already familiar to the participants and their children through other activities. While the women are cooking, an animator takes care of the children. This allows the participants to create space for themselves and make contact other women.

The project focuses on:

- Women with refugee status
- Asylum-seeking women
- Other immigrants

The project is realized in cooperation with the *Arbeiterhilfswerk*, the Red Cross and other integration organizations in Ticino.

Cooking together has been running since January 2015 and a blog has been created to collect the recipes, stories and photos of each meeting. The blog can be accessed at this Internet address: <http://narrativekitchen.blogspot.ch/>

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