Looking at the historic Italian American community of East Harlem in the 1920s and 30s, Simone Cinotto recreates the bustling world of Italian life in New York City and demonstrates how food was at the enter of the lives of immigrants and their children. From generational conflicts resolved around the family table to a vibrant food-based economy of ethnic producers, importers, and restaurateurs, food was essential to the creation of an Italian American identity. Italian American foods offered not only sustenance but also powerful narratives of community and difference, tradition and innovation as immigrants made their way through a city divided by class conflict, ethnic hostility, and racialized inequalities.

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