



These are small, dry biscuits made with grape must and are ring-shaped or squashed strips. They are made of soft wheat flour, white grape must, sugar and anise seeds. All the ingredients are mixed (by hand or in a mixer) until a smooth dough is formed. The dough is shaped into small rings (or squashed strips), left to rise on a baking tray for about 2 hours and then cooked in the oven for about 30 minutes.

Version b) Ingredients: soft wheat flour, sugar, white grape must, anise seeds, raisins, olive oil, beer yeast, diced orange peel. The flour, grape must and beer yeast are mixed (by hand or in a mixer). The other ingredients are added to the mixture and small rings (or squashed strips) are formed and left to rise for about 2 hours. They are cooked in the oven for about 30 minutes. Storage: the product is fresh and should be stored at a temperature of about 6° to 8° C for no more than 2-3 days.

According to tradition, mosticcioli were Saint Francis's favourite cake. A story has been told about Jacopa de' Settesoli, a Roman noble woman, born in the Eternal City, in 1190, in an illustrious family residing in the Trastevere area. She married a rich gentleman from Rome, Graziano Frangipane, with whom she had two children. She was soon widowed, at just 27 years of age, and was forced to administer her husband's many properties, among which the small town of Marino. Two years later, in 1291, St. Francis arrived in Rome to preach and Donna Jacopa met him. From that moment on, she became a loyal follower of St. Francis and was an excellent guide for him through the streets of Rome. Jacopa de' Settesoli became the most valuable contributor to the newly created Franciscan movement in the city of Popes and also of the Poor Clares (of the order of St. Clare). She obtained, from the Benedictine order of St. Cosimato in Trastevere, the concession of the Hospital of St. Biagio, which became the first place in Rome for Minors. In 1231, immediately after the canonization of St. Francis and the initiative of Jacopa de' Settesoli, the hospital was transformed into the convent of St. Francis a Ripa, with the adjoining church later restructured in the 17th century. The chapel of St. Francis can be found inside, roughly the same as the cell in which the Saint lived while he was in Rome and it contains a stone, used by the Poor Man as a pillow. Jacopa de' Settesoli was so active and resolute that Francis fondly called her Friar Jacopa. Their friendship lasted until the Saint's death, during night between 3rd and 4th October 1226. It was during his first stay in Rome that Francis tasted what became a perpetual source of overindulgence for him: certain "tasty and

fragrant” biscuits, in the words of the Saint, were prepared by Jacopa de’ Settesoli herself and she offered them to him one day at her home. These were typical of the grape-picking season and were made with bread dough, anise seeds, sugar, almonds and grape must. This last ingredient is perhaps the reason for their name “mostaccioli”. In ancient Rome, however, some similar biscuits already existed and were known as “mortarioli”, made with sugar and almonds crushed in a mortar... In any case, whatever the origin of their name, Francis liked those mostaccioli made by Friar Jacopa de’ Settesoli so much that he even wanted them on his deathbed! When Francis felt his last hour approaching, he dictated a letter, aided by a monk, to his dear friend, Friar Jacopa, to inform her of his impending death and asking her to reach him at the Porziuncola Franciscan church, to bring him a burial gown for his funeral and... those pastries:

*“To donna Jacopa, servant of God, the poor man of Christ, brother Francis, sends his greetings with the Lord and communion with the Holy Spirit. My dearest, I want you to know that the blessed Lord has gracefully revealed to me that the end of my life is near. Thus, if you wish to find me alive, as soon as you receive this letter please hurry to Santa Maria degli Angeli. For if you arrive later than Saturday, you will not find me alive. Bring with you an ash coloured cloth to wrap my body in and candles for the burial. Also, please bring me those cakes that you always gave me when I was ill in Rome”.*