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## Marcello Mastroianni and Sofia Loren, Remembering this dynamic film duo



*Marcello Mastroianni and Sofia Loren*  
**COOKIE CURCI**  
MARCH 25, 2013

In my opinion, the most romantic and dynamic pairing of a leading man and women in the world of film, was Sophia Loren and Marcello Mastroianni . They made 17 films together...Just saying and hearing their names titillated American audiences in the 1960s and 70s.....and when these actors emoted on the big screen...well, it was like every adult in the audience believed it was for their eyes only.

In 1965, when Photoplay magazine asked its readers to vote for their favorite new Hollywood stars Italian born Marcello Mastroianni and Sophia Loren came in the top two on a list that included Italian Americans Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin. During the 1960s, when much of the film industry was in the doldrums film directors and stars, imported from

Italy, attracted audiences back to the movie houses. These internationally famous superstars created an enviable image of the cool, good-looking jet setter.

Marcello Mastroianni, with his tall, dark, handsome good looks just naturally filled the roll of the bon vivant man of the world. American movie fans adored his on screen persona. While his rakish smile and devil-may-care attitude, appealed to American men, who envied his unencumbered lifestyle? But it was Mastroianni's sensitive, romantic, nature that attracted his faithful female followers.

Mastroianni was born in 1924, in Fontana, Italy, but his family would soon move to Turin and then on to Rome. The Italian star's real life may have been more exciting then some of his movie rolls. As a young man, serving in the military during W.W.II, Mastroianni was captured and sent to a German prison camp. He managed to escape and hide in Venice at the home of friends and relative. After the war Mastroianni tried his hand at acting. His breakthrough film came in 1960, when Federico Fellini cast the sexy actor as an attractive, journalist in the jet-set film, *La Dolce Vita* (1960) This film would prove to be the genesis of his "Latin lover" persona.



(1963)

Marcello Mastroianni e Sofia Loren "Ieri, oggi e domani"

When asked about his famous role in this Fellini film, the actor is said to have told interviewers that he was hired because Fellini thought he had a "terribly ordinary face."

Mastroianni was never one to take his star status seriously. In fact, he couldn't understand why some method actors made working in films so much work. "I just do what comes naturally," said Mastroianni, "no preparation, no hours of studying, and it's always turns out to be more fun than work."

Mastroianni starred in a series of films with his equally famous counterpart, Sophia Loren. One of the most memorable films was *Ieri, Oggi, Domani* (Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow) (1963). These films proved to be Italy's most popular pairing of a male and female star in the 20th century. Award winning Costumes by Christian Dior enhanced these films, which exploits the enormous appeal of both stars. When asked by a reporter why he rarely portrayed mobsters in his films Mastroianni answered with a wink, "I'm a lover, not a fighter." He more than lived up to that reputation.

Marcello Mastroianni was wed to Flora Carabella since 1948. However, at his bedside when he died were his long time, extra marital amore, actress Catherine Deneuve, and their love child Chiara. It seems this Latin lover's personal life was not far from the on screen romantic characters he portrayed.

The luscious Sophia Loren was by far Mastroianni most popular costar, indeed Sophia Loren is considered to be the most famous Italian actress of all time. Sophia Loren was born Sofia Villani Scicolone on September, 20, 1934. She grew up in poverty in wartime in Pozzuoli, a town near Naples, where she gained the famous nickname "toothpick" because she was so thin. But that skinny little girl had a dream, to raise herself from poverty and use her talents to achieve her goals. By the second half of the 1950s, her star began to rise in Hollywood with films such as 1957's *Boy on a Dolphin* and *The Pride and the Passion*, (in which she co-starred with Frank Sinatra). Loren became an international film star with a five-picture contract with Paramount Studios.

Among her films at this time: *Desire Under the Elms* with Anthony Perkins (based upon the Eugene O'Neill play), *Houseboat* (a romantic comedy again co-starring Cary Grant), and George Cukor's *Heller in Pink Tights* Loren demonstrated considerable dramatic skills and gained respect as a dramatic and comedy actress, especially in Italian projects where she more freely expressed herself. Although she had gained proficiency in the English language.

In 1960, her acclaimed performance in Vittorio De Sica's *Two Women* earned her a multitude of awards and, along with the Cannes, Venezia and Berlin festivals' best performance prizes, the distinction of being the first actor to win a major category Academy Award (Best Actress) for a non-English language performance.

These two Italian super stars inspired movie fans to a better lifestyle; they made the kind of film that made every moviegoer's heart beat faster, not with fear, but with anticipation for the warmth, love and romance that is Italy's own.

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