

DiGiorno

'Focaccia Launch TV'

Bestowing frozen store-bought pizza with homemade old-world charm is a tall order, but much credit goes to the concept for doing so rather deftly.

This 'creation story', set amidst an archetypal Italian village, adds a taste of the fantastical, and treats it all with a reverential tone to give the feeling of a storybook legend. The end result is a completely original tale that imbues the product with genuine quality.

Our first priority is servicing the seminal moment in this town's history, during which the first-ever Ultimate Focaccia pizza is made inside the bakery. It's our duty to demonstrate the importance of this moment with suitably stirring and reverential images.

The next step is ensuring that this island town evokes an authentic community rich in atmosphere, historical texture and uniquely memorable supporting characters. After all, we want to set a standard for all the ensuing forays onto this island, which the campaign will hopefully enjoy for years to come.

Finally, we aim to use a visual language inspired by (but not directly mimicking) earthbound fantasy films like *Amélie*. We understand the delicacy with which this must be handled, and are fully committed to collaborating with you on all levels. What follows are some of our initial thoughts as to how we might handle the specifics of the launch spot.

## **THE ULTIMATE TOWN**

From our perspective, this town and its inhabitants want to feel like an amalgamation of those found in neo-classic European films like *Cinema Paradiso* and *Il Postino*, with an overall style that's quite timeless.

The streets have a handmade quality to them, narrow passages all leading to the piazza at the centre of town. The buildings themselves have withstood the centuries, and we can see how, while being repurposed over and over again, their facades are stoic remnants of old world coastal Italy.

The overgrowth of vines demonstrates the maturity of the town, while also adding a patina to the landscape's otherwise earthy tones. It seems as if only a few hints of the present have slipped through these gates. Elements such as cars and motorbikes lightly pepper the curbsides and snaky roadways, but even these signs of modern convenience should have a well-worn quality.

And then we have these local villagers, representatives from several generations who've likely spent their entire lives on this tiny idyllic island. As a result, they seem to have retained the feeling of a tight-knit community and spirit of a much simpler time where, on any given weekend, you'll find the old men jawing at the cafes, the old women taking their *bambinos* shopping, the middle aged mothers hanging the laundry, and the more mischievous adolescents cavorting in the streets. Everyone

knows everyone else and would have a story to tell about him/her, if we only had time to stop and listen. So, obviously casting is going to be a crucial piece of the puzzle, and we want to get a true hodgepodge of authentic characters, even if their role is ultimately relegated to the background.

## THE STORYLINE

The board is an excellent blueprint for the basic story structure, with the main thrust obviously being the preparation of the first ever Ultimate Focaccia pizza, with glimpses of the curious townsfolk collecting outside working in support of that.

Narrative economy is crucial, and we're well aware of the brevity necessary to build the story outside, versus the one inside the bakery. But the overall story provides opportunities for quite a bit of editorial latitude and intercutting between bakery and street (similar to how the mood piece was structured). The give-and-take plus constant build up might further the gravitas of the product's reveal. With that in mind, here are some of our thoughts about the basic story beats, plus some additional options we might want to consider covering.

So, we open on our push in through the clouds, to our satellite view of Italy and the pizza-shaped island just off the coast. Once we've established that there's civilization topping this island, we have the choice to either fly in, or simply cut down to closer view. (We can make this decision in the edit, but it might be interesting to cut almost immediately into the bakery, showing the impetus for the attraction before seeing the locals on the hunt. But for the purposes of this treatment, we'll stick to the order of the board).

We then meet our first featured locals – a group of adolescent boys atop bicycles, likely handed down to them from their older siblings. Perhaps these kids are outfitted in shirts and shorts that their uncle from the mainland sent over to them, satisfying their hopes of emulating their favourite footballers. There's a sense of mischievousness with these kids that the town elders probably misconstrue as disrespect, harmless as they may be.

As they fly past some of the other locals, past the walls closely flanking the streets, they catch sight of the vines growing and sprouting tomatoes. It's quite subtle, and perhaps only the children, with that childlike sense of wonder, are privy to the sight, thereby adding a little extra magic to the moment.

Other townsfolk begin to catch wind that something's on, and they follow the trajectory of the boys on bikes. It's at this moment, that all of the different characters –fleeting as their appearances may be – come out of the woodwork.

They make their way past the statue of the town's founder, which gives a cursory glance toward the town centre. It should be a rather small flick of the eyes, a nearly imperceptible movement that once again, is possibly only perceived by the children (or maybe a pigeon startled by the movement of its roosting spot?).

It also might be worth shooting some additional beats along this path. For example, we might see a street vendor with his fruit and vegetable cart. The moment he sees the parade of people, he drops what he's doing and joins in, abandoning the cart,

which begins to roll away. Or, perhaps a man changes a tire at the side of the road and takes off with the crowd, leaving the car to crash back down on all four wheels.

Furthermore, it might be worth cutting inside an old darkened café where, amongst the tiny tables and black and white photos adorning the walls, several of the town's elder statesmen, in weathered but dignified wardrobe, sip their espressos and play chess, or dominoes. The light from outside pools in, illuminating the history in their faces. They're taken aback by the crowd passing by outside.

Perhaps we see a shot from inside, framing up the window, with the old men's bodies silhouetted in the foreground as they slowly get up to see what all the ruckus is about.

Now on to the story's centrepiece: the bakery.

Inside this warmly, dimly lit bakery, we see the dough slammed down on a workbench. The impact sends plumes of flour billowing into the air. We see several shots romancing this virtuoso preparation, with the baker's supple hands skilfully kneading the dough, tossing it in the air, and dropping the toppings onto it with absolute precision.

If it makes sense, perhaps when the olive oil hits the dough it canons off the surface, mimicking the olive oil fountains at the spot's end?

The baker character has a look of intense determination, as if this is being made to please a king. And his apprentices stand closely by, their gazes locked onto this 'master class.' Their subtle expressions of pleasure and awe, like audience members in a particularly emotional symphony performance, tell us that something truly special is happening.

This is just food for thought, but it might be interesting to cover an option where we see the boys on bikes – the first to arrive in the piazza – actually peer in on what's happening in the bakery. That is, they might drop their bikes, run to the back of the bakery and, piling on top of each other's shoulders, catch an obscured sight of the Ultimate Focaccia in its final moments of preparation. Again, it's just an option, but it may add some additional weight to the moment, and as soon as one boy sees that the pizza is ready to be revealed, he grabs his friends and runs them to the front of the bakery.

In the piazza, it seems as though the entire town has congregated. Their mutters dial down to a hushed whisper, and then absolute silence as the front doors of the bakery burst open, revealing the baker. His appearance is a bit of a show, with the doors opening like those of a theatre, and his mannerisms like those of a conjurer, presenting his creation high in the air for all to see. Perhaps he's illuminated from behind by an ethereal glow, the serendipitous combination of floury atmosphere and the warm light of an unseen oven.

The baker steps into the crowd, who parts for him as he makes his way to one particular local: the food critic. We quite like the idea of making this character a bit older, as if his acute sense of taste has taken years to develop, and he's perhaps a bit curmudgeonly about it, to boot. The baker deferentially presents him with a slice,

stepping back while he takes a bite. Everyone waits with bated breath (perhaps a few of the old hens gossip in each other's ears). We might even see some kids who have instinctively gathered around the old man. Apprentices at heart, waiting to step into this elder's shoes, they look up at him, their eyes wide in anticipation.

The food critic's pouty face lifts into a robust smile, and he continues to eat.

The exhale from the crowd transforms into a collective cheer, and the scene bursts to life as the fountains erupt with their glistening olive oil. It would be quite nice if, while capturing all of that spirit, we explore some of the town's characters with brief glimpses of them celebrating. We might see an old fisherman dancing with the most beautiful girl in town, much to the chagrin of her ten other suitors. We see an Oompah-style band, replete with accordions, strings and horns, cavorting about the crowd. Tailors and jugglers and perhaps even a couple constables make merry, as well. Again, all of these characters would feel like part of the town's texture, rather than individuals warranting a full story beat of their own.

We then cut to a shot from above, and as the crowd disperses, pull back high above the island and through the clouds, which vaguely resemble rising steam and facilitate the transition into the pizza box.

We had one thought about an alternate beat to replace the cuckoo clock in the boards. What if we cut to a black and white snapshot of this scene, with the baker holding up the Ultimate Focaccia and posing for camera, with several other locals gathered around the new hero? It's a photo suited for the 'wall of fame' inside the café and will likely be hung there, even if we don't ever see it.

Just an afterthought about the elderly 'food critic' character, but it might be interesting to subtly introduce him earlier in the story, and perhaps in the café scene. For example, upon seeing the kids racing by the window, he's encouraged by his younger (i.e. 60-something) colleagues to get to the event. Perhaps one of them even points to his wristwatch, reminding him that he's "running late for work."

All of the above ideas are just our initial thoughts. Our main goal is satisfying the original board, of course; but we'd love to continue evolving some of these additional coverage options with you all.

## **THE FILMMAKING**

In terms of the actual style of filmmaking, we definitely feel that a classically cinematic approach would strengthen the story's impact. We spoke about Amélie earlier, but perhaps that camerawork is a bit too calculated for the purposes of our story. Sure, we have the heightened shots descending to and ascending from the island, but for the most part, our coverage should be rather unobtrusive – especially with regard to the near-mayhem ensuing outside. Countering that mayhem, though, is the more reverential way in which we plan to shoot the food preparation inside the kitchen.

For starters, we'd like to shoot most of that coverage at 50 frames-per-second, giving it an otherworldly serenity. Simple actions like pouring olive oil, and dropping cheese onto dough take on a strange beauty and magnitude. It's also important to note that,

since there's some crossover between our food work and the traditional tabletop coverage, we'll want to collaborate with the other director as soon as possible. It's crucial that the tabletop footage feels not only in situ, but also is stylistically integrated with the rest of the story, rather than appearing as a separate piece.

All of the footage should serve the story, even if it's making the food look spectacular as well.

In terms of the CG effects, and their integration, we feel as though they should be absolutely photorealistic. This important sense of enchantment within the spot should still derive from a very real place. So, while the rapid growth of the vine, and the statue coming to life are quite magical conceptually, their execution should be rather tastefully understated, and absolutely, seamlessly integrated into the live action.

Finally, on a musical note, we quite liked what you presented in your mood piece. It had a great energy, and the style was rather appropriate to the story's province, as well. We'd like to continue discussing the role of the music, and whether or not we'd like it to drive the structure, as it did in the mood piece.

Also, it might be interesting if we had a break in the music during the part in the story when the locals all wait for the food critic's response, and then upon his approval, cued the music back up in sync with the oompah band playing a celebratory ditty.

In the end, this is really only the beginning, with quite a lot more to discover together. This spot could be a visual feast, and become the benchmark for a whole campaign to come. We'd love to give it the focus and the attention it deserves.