

# Fifty years of twinning with Florence

✘ The Lord Provost is off to Florence for a day or two to celebrate 50 years of Scotland's Capital and Florence being 'twinning'. Accompanied by chef Paul Wedgwood and Makar, Christine de Luca he is hoping to strengthen the relationship between the two cities.

Originally signed in Edinburgh in 1964, a [twinning city agreement](#) between the two destinations will be reaffirmed for what will hopefully be another 50 successful years when the Lord Provost Donald Wilson meets with the Honourable Dario Nardella, Mayor of Florence.

To mark the anniversary, Edinburgh-based chef Paul Wedgwood of [Wedgwood: The Restaurant](#) will undertake a 'chef swap' to showcase Edinburgh's food and drink offering and promote the city as a culinary destination.

Tying into the year of Food and Drink Scotland, Paul will take a week-long residency of a Florentine restaurant to cook traditional Scottish dishes with an Italian twist to promote the [Edinburgh Restaurant Festival](#) in October. Florence will return the favour for Edinburgh residents when a guest chef brings an Italian flavour to the Festival, which is being organised by Marketing Edinburgh.

Edinburgh's poet in residence, the [Edinburgh Makar](#) Christine De Luca, has written a specially commissioned poem celebrating the cultural and culinary connections between the two cities. Christine, who has family ties to Italy, describes Edinburgh's shared love of food in '*Soil, sea and soul*' which she will recite in both English and Italian.

Paul, Christine and the Lord Provost have travelled to Italy for one week to mark the anniversary, reaffirm the twin city

agreement, and strengthen the economic, cultural and educational ties between Edinburgh and Florence.

The Lord Provost, Donald Wilson, said: “Edinburgh and Florence are over 1,000 miles apart but the cities share two very important features – both are designated UNESCO World Heritage cities and both are creative cities which are renowned for celebrating culture. Edinburgh has a huge number of first, second and third generation Italian Scots residents and over the years the two cultures have become inseparable.

“The Edinburgh Makar’s poem and chef swap initiative celebrates the two cities’ shared passion for creativity. My hope is that this trip helps to promote Edinburgh’s fantastic culinary and cultural offering, allows us to exchange educational and heritage opportunities with Florence, and strengthens the bonds that have been developed over the last 50 years.”

Paul Wedgwood said: “I am very much looking forward to the trip. It is very exciting to be cooking over there and twinning Scottish cuisine with an Italian twist. This is also beneficial in maintaining the strong bonds that have been created over the last 50 years whilst creating delicious culinary cultural opportunities!”

Edinburgh Makar Christine de Luca added: “I’ve enjoyed ‘cooking up’ a poem to fit the occasion – I’m sure it will sound better in Italian which always seems a naturally poetic language. I have an Italian family name but don’t be fooled, I acquired it from my husband who is Scottish Italian!”