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While I am a few generations away from my family's original ancestry to Italy I do realize that some of the same traditions that were an integral part of the culture are still practiced at home. From what I have been told and what is still a big part of my life is that "family" is the foundation of my future and always a steadfast symbol of Italian Heritage.

Growing up we sat at the table as a family to eat and share our day, no phones or electronics allowed! When I think about what Italian heritage may be I picture the same but with different scenery, different clothing, different country, and different language but with the same tradition of a family together enjoying their time. I am familiar with these family gatherings that of course center on traditional Italian food. Italian food is part of heritage but I look upon it as the glue that brings us all together and bonds a tradition that I hope to carry on as I one day have my own family.

Family and food are important but I also believe a strong work ethic and a simplistic style of living was also passed on from generation to generation. I have been told about my great grandparents working in the mills of Fall River to provide a future for their children. With limited education this generation of Italian's proved to have strength and fortitude to make a better life. They did not need a fancy car or home

yet they knew how to save, be frugal, stay humble and put their family first.

Other cultures may have the same philosophies but I know of only my own. The Italian traditions and lifestyle instilled in me as a child have made an impact in my life and I am proud to have my last name like Mauretti that gives an instant impression that my ancestors were from Italy.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul Mauretti". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.