

Carretto Siciliano

The Carretto Siciliano (Sicilian Cart) was born in a more recent era, early 1800's, but some can be traced back to 1200 B.C., where they were introduced to Sicily by ancient Greeks. These carts were originally built by peasants for means of transportation and work. It was used to haul items such as dirt, wood, sand, stone, and grapes to make wine. The real history behind the elaborate decorations is not really known. Some believe that the paintings and carvings are a sort of history book for those who can't read. Others believe that over the years, people have just added their own touch. The building of these carts is a very complicated process, considering all the detail of the carvings that the craftsmen had to make and the time it took to do it. The process starts with the builder selecting the type of wood to be used, which depends on what the cart will be used for. The materials are then sent to the craftsmen for carving. The final step consists of the elaborate painting, in which the artist has to figure out what colors to use and how to use them according to the carvings of the wood. Needless to say, it takes a lot of hard work and dedication for completion. The colors used by the artist can help you identify where the cart originated from. For instance, eastern Sicily used more reds and greens than other colors because they symbolize nature (fruits, vegetables, grass, birds, etc.). Western Sicily used more yellow and red symbolizing wars fought and loves lost. Both regions used blue symbolizing religious subjects. The carts have played such an important part in history of Sicily, it is now one of the most recognized symbols of Sicily. The carts are no longer used for work. They are now objects of history that are adored by all Sicilians. The carts are also used for parades and festivals.

We, the Buffa Family, have brought a piece of our culture to the Tri-Cities for everyone to experience a small piece of Sicilian history and our heritage.

