Fifty years ago the F-104 Starfighter entered service with the Aeronautica Militare Italiana, marking the start of an illustrious era in Italian military aviation.

**Italy's Spillone**

*By Mauro Rocca*

**Starfighter for Italy**

In 1961, the F-104 Starfighter was introduced to the Aeronautica Militare Italiana, marking the start of a new era in Italian military aviation. The aircraft proved to be a versatile and effective fighter, capable of performing a wide range of missions.

**Roccamonfina**

The Starfighters operated from Roccamonfina, an Italian airbase located in the Lazio region. The base was an important hub for Italian military aviation, serving as a strategic location for the deployment of fighter aircraft.

**Two可以**

The F-104 was a powerful and agile aircraft, capable of high-speed performance and precise maneuvering. The two-seat configuration allowed for efficient operation, with a pilot and a back-up pilot on standby.

**Reconnaissance**

The Starfighter was equipped with advanced reconnaissance capabilities, allowing for the collection of vital information on enemy positions and activities.

**Il for Sparravoli**

The Starfighter was known for its impressive performance, particularly in high-speed flight. The aircraft's aerodynamic design allowed for exceptional speed and agility, making it a formidable opponent in aerial combat.

**Italian Starfighter Operations**

The F-104 was a highly capable aircraft, with a long operational history. Its versatility and reliability made it a valued asset for the Aeronautica Militare Italiana, serving in various roles and playing a crucial role in defending Italy's airspace.

**End of the Line**

As technology advanced, the F-104 was gradually phased out of service, with the Aeronautica Militare Italiana transitioning to newer and more advanced aircraft models. The Starfighter's legacy lived on, however, as a testament to its performance and the expertise of the Italian pilots who operated it.