

La Casa



By Roger Meloche

A traditional, team based or head to head trick-taking game with twist. A new Challenge arises with each round which must be dealt with, and could even turn the game upside down. The only thing that doesn't change is the struggle to be the dominant Mafia family.

Card Face art by Imane Moussaid

La Casa

Four players can team up, to play two against two.

Two players can also play head to head.

There is even a solo variant.

Mafia families are competing to win Tricks each round to score points. A unique Challenge is revealed each round which can change one of the basic rules, alter the objectives, or even turn the game upside-down.

The team or player with the highest score after the last Challenge is resolved Wins the game.

The Main Deck

The **Main Deck** consists of 4 Families (*Suits*) and a special Mangia-Cake card.

Each Family has members ranked from #1 to #7, with the Nonni (*Grandparents*) ranking the highest.

Within each Family there are two #4 cards, Zia & Zio (*Aunt and Uncle*), as well as two #6 cards, Mamma and Papa (*Mother and Father*).



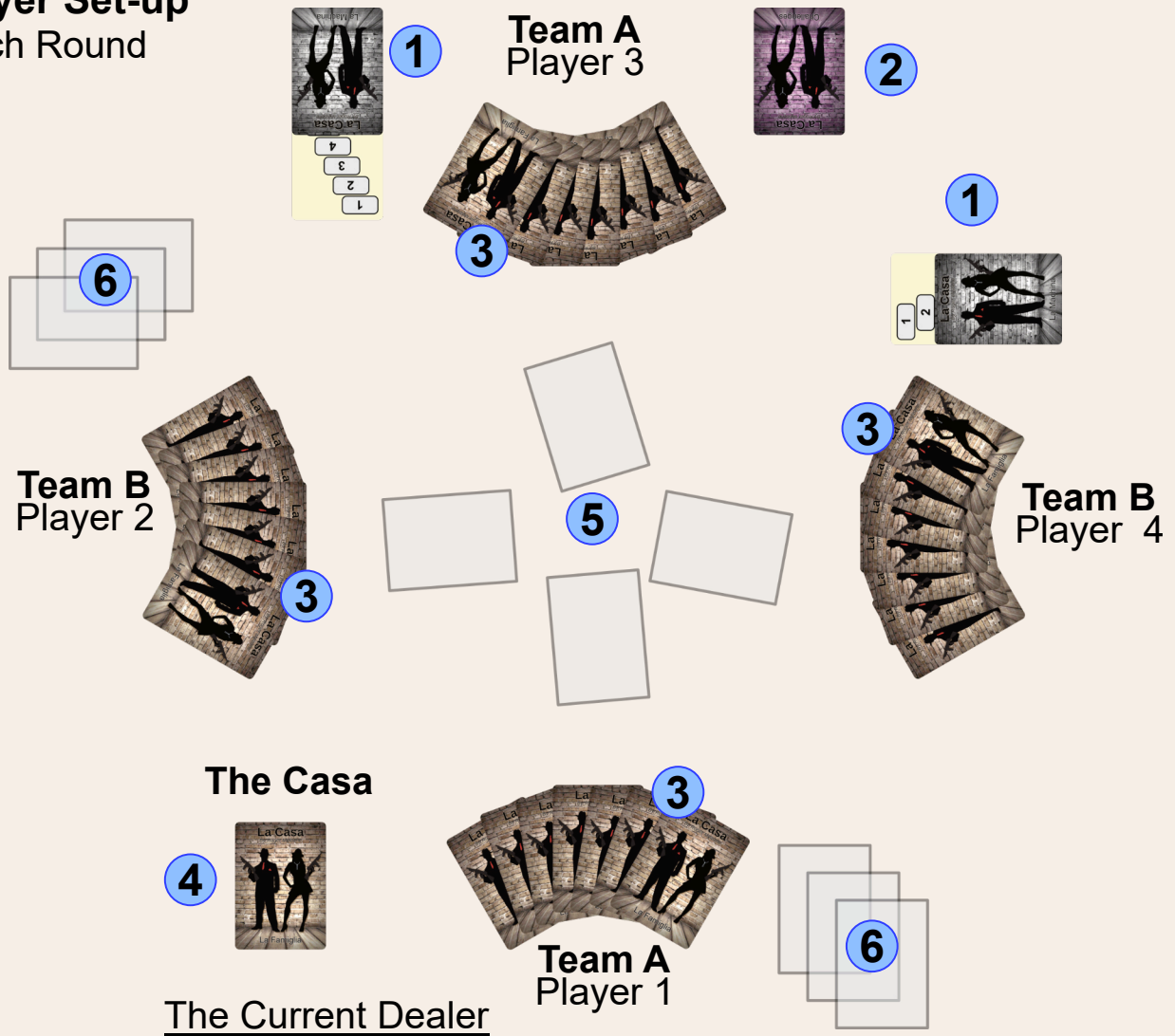
The **Mangia-Cake**, who has no real loyalty, belongs no specific Family. It will become the lowest ranking member current of the Ruling Family. (Trump). If a Ruling Family is not selected for the round, the Mangia-Cake is the only member of the Ruling Family. (Highest Card)



Each team or player gets a pair of **counting cards** which are used to track their score.

4 Player Set-up

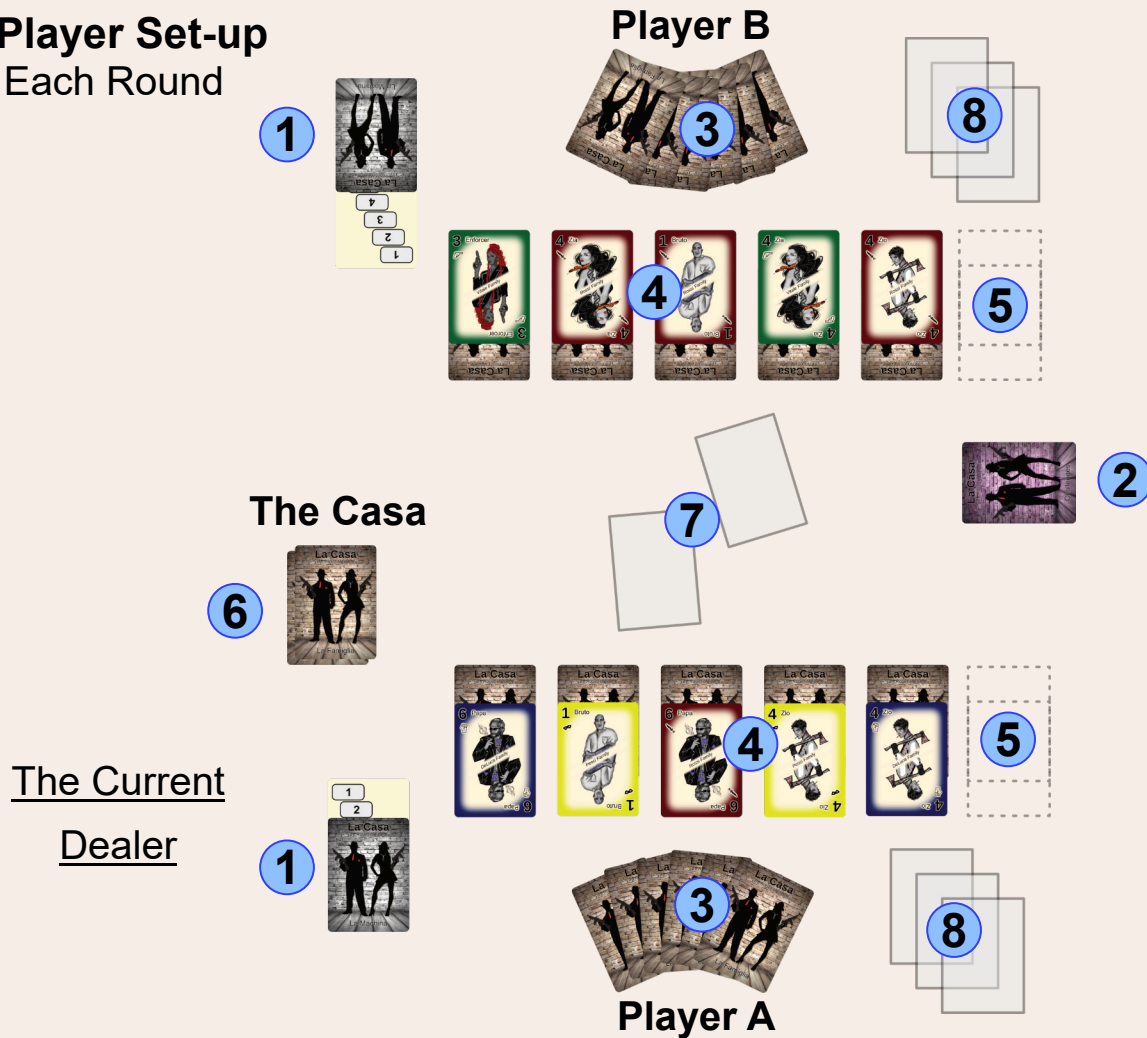
Each Round



- ① Each Team has a pair of Score Counting Cards.
- ② One player is selected to manage the Challenge Deck.
- ③ The Current Dealer deals out the hand of 7 cards to each player for the round. *(Unless instructed otherwise by the Challenge)*
- ④ The remaining cards are placed face down to form the Casa (*Kitty*) in front of the current Dealer.
- ⑤ The Tricks are played out in the Central Play Area.
- ⑥ Each Trick won, is placed off to the side of the winning team for scoring at the end of the round.

2 Player Set-up

Each Round



- 1 Each Team has a pair of Counting Cards for tracking their score.
- 2 One player is selected to manage the Challenge Deck.
- 3 The Dealer deals out a hand of **6 cards** from the Main Deck to each player for the round.
- 4 The Dealer then deals out a Tableau of 5 cards face down covered by 5 cards face up for each player.
- 5 If a Challenge specifies that two more cards are given to each player, they are added to each player's Tableau. (*One face up and one face down.*)
- 6 The remaining cards are placed face down, forming the Casa (*Kitty*) in front of the Dealer.
- 7 The Tricks are played out in the central area.
- 8 Each Trick won, is placed off to the side of the winning player for scoring at the end of the round.

A Few Notes:

Text notes in blue refers to terms used in traditional trick-taking games. Feel free to ignore these.

The Rules Supplement contains in depth Challenge descriptions, alternate variants and a glossary of terms.

The Solo supplement contains the Solo rules and Solo Challenge descriptions

The Challenges

A new Challenge is revealed each round. Rules or procedures outlined on these cards will override the basic game rules and must be followed throughout the round.

Challenges are specific to certain player counts.

- Solo Play
- Two Players
- Teams (two teams of two)

Use only the scenarios for your specific player count.



Six Challenges are used for each game.

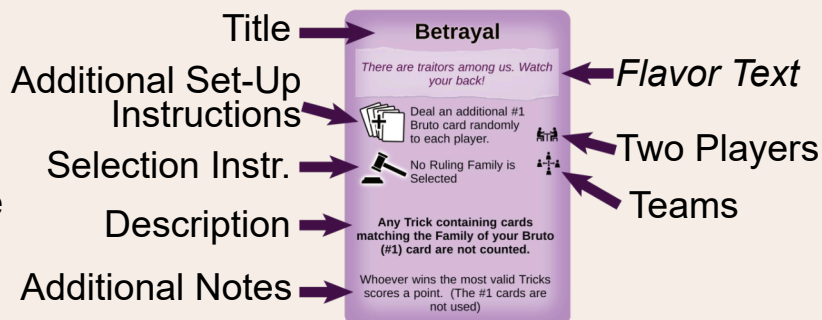
They are randomly chosen to form the Challenge Deck and the remaining cards are set aside.

You can add more Challenges if you want a longer game.

(If a player or Team reaches 12 points, they immediately win.)

It is best to select one player to manage the Challenge Deck for the entire game. The current Dealer may also do this if the players choose.

Note: A Challenge Card could modify any of the standard rules regarding: Tricks, Scoring, and winning objectives for the round.



How to Play

The game is played over a number of Rounds. Each Round, a new Challenge card is revealed which will change the rules for the current round.

One player should be selected to manage the Challenge Deck for the entire game. *(6 Challenge cards or more.)*

The Dealer for the first round is chosen, then a new Dealer is selected for each new round. This will be the player to the left of the previous dealer.

The game continues until the last Challenge is completed. The Team or player with the highest score wins the game.

Note: Your first round or two can be played without revealing a Situation card. This results in a lighter game and can give new players a chance to learn the basic rules.

Each Round

A The Reveal

The top card of the Challenge Deck is flipped over and read aloud. Any additional set-up or Selection instructions on the Challenge card are followed in order from top to bottom. Any rule changes or round objectives described on the Challenge Card will be active throughout this round.

B The Deal

The Dealer deals out the cards and follows any additional set-up instructions described on the Challenge Card. The remaining cards are placed face down to form the Casa, *(Kitty)* in front of the Dealer.

(The Challenge card may modify the deal.)

C The Selection

The Dealer flips the top card of the Casa face-up. The Family of this card becomes the Ruling Family *(Trump)* for this round. If this card is the Mangia-Cake, then there will be no Ruling Family this round.

(The Challenge card may modify, or even eliminate this step.)

D Taking Tricks

The Dealer Leads the first Trick by playing a card, face up, to the Central Play Area. Each other player in clockwise order will also play one card. The winner of the Trick is determined and the winning Team or Player gathers these cards and stores them in a stack, face down for scoring at the end of the round. The player who won the last Trick will Lead the next Trick by playing the first card card again.

Note: In a **Two Player** game, a player can either play a card from their hand or a face up card from their Tableau. After the Trick is resolved, any face down cards, in either player's Tableau which were uncovered, will be turned face up before starting the next Trick.

The first card, Leading the Trick can be any card the player chooses. **Any additional cards played after this must be from the Same Family** *(Follow Suit)* if at all possible.

(A Challenge may instruct the players to break this rule)

The Winner of each Trick is determined as follows:

- The Highest ranked card of the Ruling Family. *(Highest Trump)*
- If no Ruling Family cards are played, then the highest ranked card of the Family which Led the Trick. *(Highest lead suit)*
- If two cards of the same rank and Family are played, the last card played will win the tie.
- Any cards which are not from the Ruling Family and don't match the Family leading the trick are worth nothing, and cannot win the trick.

Play continues this way until all the cards have been played, ending the round.

E Scoring Points

Each Team or player will count the total number of Tricks they have won. The Team (or Player) who won the Majority of the Tricks will score ONE point.

(A Challenge may specify different scoring conditions)

Some Examples of Tricks



- 1 The Deluca Family (Blue) is the current Ruling Family for this round.
- 2 Player 1 from Team A leads the Trick with a Nonni (#7) Red card.
- 3 Player 2 must also play a Red card and plays a Zia (#4)
- 4 Player 3 has no Red cards and decides to play a worthless card because his teammate is currently winning the Trick.
- 5 Player 4 from Team B also has no Red cards so she plays the Mangia-Cake card. Since this is the only card From current the Ruling family (*Blue*) played, Team B wins this Trick.
- 6 Player 4 from Team B will lead the next Trick.



- 1 The Pesci Family (Yellow) is the current Ruling Family for this round.
- 2 Player A leads with a Papa (#6) Red card because Player B has three lower ranked Red cards in their Tableau.
- 3 Player B, however, has a Mamma (#6 red) in their hand and plays it. Player 2 wins the tie and wins the challenge.
- 4 Player A will now flip the uncovered card in the Tableau face-up.
- 5 Player B will lead the next Trick.