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The Authentic Italian Cuisine of Osteria Tulia



Chef Vincenzo Betulia

Naples, Florida is known for its temperate weather, beautiful homes, shopping and exceptional dining. One of the finest dining experiences that you can have in Naples, or in the State of Florida, or to be honest - anywhere, is at Osteria Tulia. Not only is it Florida's first osteria, but the restaurant transports diners to the atmosphere and authentic cuisine of the rustic and charming Italian osterie. These were informal village taverns serving simple, homemade, local specialties and regional wines. The dining room main-



Osso Bucco at Osteria Tulia

tains the flavor of a restored Italian farmhouse. The menu and décor of Osteria Tulia are inspired by the cuisine of owner and Executive Chef Vincenzo Betulia's childhood and the centuries-old tradition of a robust menu with artisanal features.

Dishes are prepared using the highest quality ingredients from producers in the U.S. and Italy. All meats, fish, vegetables and fruits are sourced locally; while the olive oils, vin-

egars, select artisanal cheeses, rare wines and craft beers are imported from small, family-owned producers throughout Italy. The breads, pastas, sauces and desserts are made in-house by Chef Vincenzo's extraordinary culinary team of 30. Since the kitchen is a place for family, at Osteria Tulia, you will find the chef's parents, wife and even cousin, Frank Pullara, who is the chef di cucina.

The menu sparkles with names that evoke both smiles and curiosity. "The Pig in the Olive Grove" pizza is made with speck (see the Italian Tribune's Tavola page of last week's edition for a description of speck), olivada, wild oregano and - not just fresh, but homemade mozzarella. There are many selections that are not simply curious or interesting, they are enchanting. There is tagliatelle pasta with mussels N'duja and local white corn; Cappelletti with Burrata and slow-cooked lamb. Sometimes called the essence of the southern Italian soul, Chef Vincenzo's lamb is made with garganelli, lamb sugo, tomato and sheep cheese. He prepares his Faroe Island Salmon with puffed faro salad, fava, taggia olives and yogurt. The piattini and antipasti include items such as in-house made fennel sausage, beluga lentils and crisp carrots. Chef Vincenzo's creations include remarkable combinations of flavors that are at once familiar, yet unique. A perfect example is Tuscan chicken liver, with a fried farm egg and house pancetta - a perfect dish for lunch. For a traditional and authentic Sicilian meal, look no further than meatballs with toasted pine nuts, currants and tomatoes. Be forewarned, it is likely to bring tears of gratitude to your eyes. Yes, it is that good. For those who enjoy fowl, try Osteria Tulia's potted duck rilette with blackberry and grilled bread.

Vincenzo Betulia is a native



Chef Vincenzo Betulia shaving truffles for one of his impeccably prepared dishes at Osteria Tulia.

of Sicily and emigrated to Milwaukee, Wisconsin with his family when he was two. He began working in the industry after school when he was only 14 years old. This was in Milwaukee's Ristorante Bartolotta. He became the protégé of Joe Bartolotta and worked his way up to the position of chef, ultimately helping him to open two additional Bartolotta restaurants in Milwaukee, including the James Beard award-winning Lake Park Bistro, a restaurant known for its classic French country fare. Betulia attended the Kendall Culinary School and further honed his skills at Bartolotta's acclaimed Chicago restaurant - Spiaggia. While on a vacation in Naples, Florida, Chef Vincenzo fell in love with the area. He arranged to join the staff of the Campiello

Restaurant as chef. He was head chef of the restaurant for nine years, before opening his namesake, Osteria Tulia in January

2013. The award-winning success of the restaurant permitted Chef Vincenzo to open his second restaurant - Bar Tulia, an Italian gastro-pub and craft cocktail bar, in December 2014. His style, inventiveness and presentation have made the chef a culinary trendsetter, leading Naples culinary evolution. Earlier this week, Chef Vincenzo opened The French, his third restaurant, a French brasserie.

He has won a Best Chefs of America Award from 2013 to 2016 and he was also featured in a segment of Emeril's Florida, which aired on the Food Network and Cooking Channel. USA Today's 10 Best has recognized Osteria Tulia as the number one Italian restaurant and number one lunch spot in Naples, Florida. Osteria Tulia also has received a Golden Spoon Award in 2013, 2015 and 2016 by Florida Trend magazine, which selects the top restaurants in the State of Florida.

When you are in Naples, mark your calendar and make a reservation at Osteria Tulia. Say hello to Chef Vincenzo and mention that you have read about his restaurants in the Italian Tribune. After one dining experience, you will likely count the days until you can return.



This poetic dish is called Tortelloni Roasted Beef Short Rib, Foie Gras Emulsion & Marsala.