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Tavolino Della Nonna

Singers often record songs that are an homage (from the French, meaning: special honor or respect shown or expressed publicly) to a mother or father, a wife, friend or loved one. Sometimes they record homages to famous people or heroes in their lives. Some books are dedicated to inspirational loved ones and some great works of art are inspired by loved ones. But, an entire restaurant? Yes, my friends, owners Edward Pozzuoli and Thomas Genduso, in association with Michael Joseph Rolchigo- a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, NY in 1996 (there is no more prestigious culinary institute in the world)— the head chef and loval grandchild of a woman who inspired, encouraged and loved him in a magical way, have named their restaurant for this wonderful woman,

Tavolino Della Nonna (Grandmother's Table). Following her passing, Michael asked for the eponymous kitchen table on which they shared countless meals with family and friends.

When this soon-to-be-landmark in Coral Springs opened, out came Grandma's Table, and a sink, stove and "ice box" from the fifties. This re-creation of a life well lived exists at the entranceway of this truly special, wonderfully welcoming and sense-shattering authentic Italian eatery. Bring your grandmothers, bring your grandfathers, mothers, fathers, children, friends and loved ones; I assure you it will be one of many, many return visits.

There are television sets (state-of-the-art, and I tell you this so that you don't think the TV's are from the fifties, also) that play beautiful scenes of Italy and alternate with the The Godfather. There are little framed expressions on the tables (we had, "Grandparents are a little bit parent, a little bit teacher and a little bit best friends"). And, there are great wait-personnel. In our case it was Raphael. He was knowledgeable, unintrusive and alert to our every need.

We arrived at 5 p.m. and quite understandably, the restaurant was busy then and for the entire evening. Busy, yes, but not too noisy. It was inhabited by happy people, some even singing along to the nostalgic Italian music playing in the background. What a night! Come with me now, on a journey through a gourmet diner's meal to remember; a banquet fit for royalty but served as if we were family guests.

We started with taste-popping appetizers, followed by the most mouth-watering main dishes created anywhere in Coral Springs, and

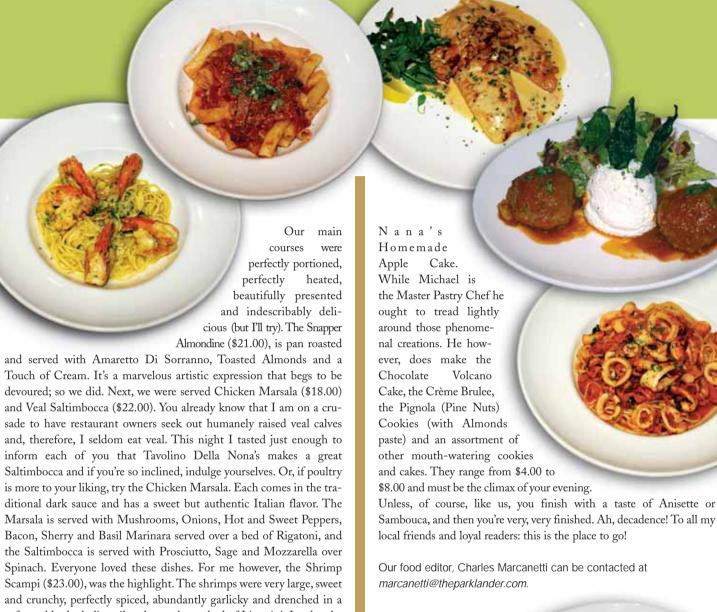


then we feasted on desserts that would make the Italian and French pastry chefs of the world die of jealousy.

The homemade bread was worth the entire meal. It was crisp-crusted and soft and sweet inside. It was accompanied by aged herbed olive oil or herbed tomato paste or (and this was absolutely fabulous), soft baked garlic/olive oil. Without a doubt you will order more...and more!

The first course was accompanied by a gentle bottle of 2004 Chardonnay by Carneros. At the same time we opened and allowed to breathe a delectable 2005 Barbera D'Alba by Mauro Veglio, a Chiantilike wine that didn't bite but maintained its legs (translation: mild and

The appetizers started with Nonna's Meatballs (\$10.00). These authentic Italian treats were firm but tender, perfectly spiced and served with Mixed Baby Greens and soft, buttery Ricotta Cheese. And then came one of Tavolino Dell Nonna's many signature items, their Stuffed Pasta w/Pear and Blue Cheese (order it by asking for "Pear Pasta") (\$11.00). Let's face it, even though they make every type of pasta by hand (Cappellini, Spaghetti, Linguini, Penne and Rigatoni), and even though there is no local pasta that even comes close, there is still only so much one can do to pasta. Right? Wrong! The Pear Pasta is remarkable. It's unique. It's a food organized to perfectly balance each ingredient and I encourage you to sample this almost mysterious treat. For those of you who like "spicy" you are invited to approach with warning the Upstate N.Y. Specialty, Escarole Ala Michael (\$8.00). Tantalizing but smokin'!



He is a magician and genius who cre-

ates the most magnificent dessert

treats found anywhere on any

continent, let alone South Florida. There are two

kinds of Cheesecakes how-

ever, that Michael doesn't

make; specifically, Nana's

Cheesecake and Nana's

Ricotta Cheesecake. These

are made by owner Ed

Pozzuoli's mother-in-law, and should be world famous. We also had Our food editor. Charles Marcanetti can be contacted at marcanetti@theparklander.com.

