

True Italian Fare Can Be Found at *Patrizia's Italy Trattoria*

In 2009, Patrizia Galassi opened *Patrizia's Italy Trattoria*, an Italian restaurant located at the Village Landing Marketplace on Plymouth's waterfront. Read below about Galassi's amazing journey to this country and her goal of giving customers authentic Italian cuisine.

I understand you grew up in Brescia, Italy. Can you tell me some of your very first culinary experiences there?

Although I was born in Brescia, I spent most of my childhood at my grandparents' home and restaurant in Mantova (Mantua), a town in the Po river region also known as Bassa Padana, known for its medieval and renaissance architecture, on the border with the Emilia-Romagna region. I grew up surrounded by fresh pasta, tortellini and Tortelli di Zucca (Squash ravioli), braised and roasted meats from recipes that go back to the Renaissance, as well as baked and roasted fish from our nearby lakes and river.

At the age of 6, my grandfather built a step-stool so I could be tall enough to reach the special table on which my grandmother taught me to "tirare la sfoglia" (roll the fresh pasta dough). This is how I fell in love with preparing food, the aromas, and the happily sated look of guests appreciating the dishes we had prepared. I then learned the special and powerful connection between people and good, simple food beautifully prepared.

I read that you started out your professional career in the United States as a lawyer. What prompted you to change careers and go into the foodservice industry?

In post-World War II Italy, many parents, including mine, wanted to make sure that their children had better opportunities than they had. Going to college was a must, and given that I was a good student, I had to receive a degree, since "only people with no academic achievements use their hands to earn a living." I never agreed with that philosophy; I understood that my parents meant well, so to keep the peace, I attended college.

I came to the United States married to a naval officer in the early 80's. At that time, we were stationed in Florida, where the idea of Parmigiano Reggiano was a green can of "something" made by Kraft. I was also the mother of a young child who wanted to make sure her son was raised eating "the Italian way." So I began offering culinary classes to anyone interested, while collecting recipes from my grandmother who patiently wrote, in her beautiful handwriting, what she had learned listening to her mother (oral tradition). Becoming the keeper of my grandmother's recipes also filled the void of having a big ocean that separated me from everything and everybody I loved, including the culinary traditions that became so much a part of my being while growing up in Italy.



"My cooking philosophy is to feature signature dishes of typical European Italian regional cuisine, as well as 'creazioni speciali' (dishes that depend on the daily catch or seasonally available produce)."

-Patrizia Galassi, owner of Patrizia's Italy Trattoria

Can you explain some differences in cooking in Italy as opposed to cooking in America?

The main difference is that in Italy we revere quality, freshness, and perfect execution of a dish instead of quantity. Italians are also more sensitive to using seasonal foods. The first artichokes of the season are celebrated.

You opened your own restaurant, *Patrizia's Italy Trattoria*, in Plymouth, MA. What made you decide to settle in Plymouth?

I was sent from Washington to work in Boston on a special legal assignment for a year; I fell in love with Plymouth while I was looking for a home. I really felt a strong connection with this town that has so many northern Italian immigrants like me. I found that we were speaking the same food

language: tortellini, sfoglia, passatelli... and that did it for me. I was going to live in Plymouth.

Can you tell me a bit about *Patrizia's Italy Trattoria* and its overall style?

My cooking philosophy is to feature signature dishes of typical European Italian regional cuisine, as well as 'creazioni speciali' (dishes that depend on the daily catch or seasonally available produce).

The hallmark of Italian food is this: fresh, seasonal, "semplice" (simple). The reason people who visit Italy came back changed forever in their attitude toward food is because they have experienced, many for the first time, the concept of eating according to the seasons. I fully embrace this philosophy because it means unforgettable cuisine - and because it is in my Italian blood.

Our philosophy is also to offer our guests the authentic Italian experience because we prepare our dishes as if we had Italian guests visiting from Italy. We want our guests to feel like they are in Italy, *with no airfare required*.

Do you have any signature dishes?

Fresh pastas, risotti, seafood. For example: Gamberi e Capesante al Limoncello (Shrimp and Scallops Limoncello), Swordfish alla Stefano, Linguine alla Masaniello, Corzetti pasta with Tocco di Funghi (a fresh pasta from Liguria in Porcini mushroom sauce), Tournados alla Rossini, Costoletta alla Milanese.

Since opening *Patrizia's Italy Trattoria*, have you changed any of your menu choices, to accommodate the economic shifts in recent years?

No, because we create dishes based on what is seasonally available.

I've heard you teach Italian cooking classes and language classes. Can you tell me about them?

I used to teach cooking classes and language classes in which students learned the Italian language while cooking Italian dishes. I do miss teaching. I had the pleasure of meeting many interesting people who, like me, shared the love for "everything" Italian. I hope to resume the course in the near future, but right now the restaurant requires all my energy and attention.

What are some ingredients and kitchen gadgets you just cannot do without?

Ingredients: pasta, tomatoes, extra-virgin olive oil, Parmigiano Reggiano. Gadgets: spatulas. Twenty years ago, spatulas were not available in Italy, and when I used one, it was love at first use, I mean sight.

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Do you do any special promotions at your restaurant to help drive business?

No. We advertise in local and industry publications and are involved in local events and charities.

Have you adjusted your cuisine over the years to accommodate new trends?

I believe in traditions, so I concentrate on the good execution of traditional recipes.

"Take pride in the dishes you prepare because they are a reflection of who we are and how committed and passionate we are in our profession."

-Patrizia Galassi, owner of Patrizia's Italy Trattoria

Who has been your role model?

My grandparents. They were successful business owners, who were not afraid to work hard and passionately to achieve their goal. They retired at age 55, at a time when, in Italy, very few people invested in the stock market.

For those young chefs just starting out in the foodservice industry, do you have any words of advice?

Be prepared to accept that there is no glamour in our profession. We are required to work long hours, sometimes in "unique" and challenging environments. Being a chef is a humbling journey; never stop wanting to learn more, be informed, read, and research because there is always someone out there who knows and does more than we do. Take pride in the dishes you prepare because they are a reflection of who we are and how committed and passionate we are in our profession.

For more information on *Patrizia's Italy Trattoria*, please visit www.patriziasitaly.com.



Our Condolences

We recently learned that one of our long-time members, Dave Jarvis of The Chart Room in Falmouth, died in April. We want to pass on to his family and sons David and Bob and their families our deepest sympathy for their loss. Dave was a very kind and gentle man who looked forward to playing at Wianno each year, and we will miss him.

We also want to extend our deepest sympathy to Bob Callahan of Diversified Business Communications (our trade show partner) and his family regarding the loss of his mother recently.

Our thoughts are with both families during these difficult times.

Cathie Baines is Awarded the 2011 ProStart® Educator Excellence Award



The MRAEF announced that Cathie Baines, of Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School in Haverhill is the Massachusetts 2011 ProStart® Educator Excellence award recipient. Baines will join 34 other top educators in Chicago, Ill. for the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation's (NRAEF) ProStart® Educator Excellence Awards from May 19-21, 2011.

Baines has taught the ProStart® program to over 700 students for the last 11 years of her career. Her students have been involved in the Mass. ProStart® Student Invitational in which the school's ProStart® Management team placed first in 2010, and went onto the National ProStart® Student Invitational. She serves as a director on the MRAEF Board of Directors, as well as NRAEF.

HOT EVENTS/HAPPENINGS 2011

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Thursday, June 9

Reception 6 p.m./Dinner and Program 7 p.m. • Danversport Yacht Club, Danvers, MA 01923

\$75 per person

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Please contact Kathy Murphy at 508-303-9905 or email Kathy at kmurphy@massrestaurantassoc.org.