

WHO'S WHO

IN THE RESTAURANT INDUSTRY



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BIELAT SANTORE
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A PROFESSIONAL REAL ESTATE ORGANIZATION

Bielat Santore & Company is an established commercial real estate firm. The company's expertise lies chiefly within the restaurant and hospitality industry, specializing in the sale of restaurants and other food and beverage real estate and businesses. Since 1978, the principals of Bielat Santore & Company, Barry Bielat and Richard Santore, have sold more restaurants and similar type properties in New Jersey than any other real estate company. Furthermore, the firm has secured in excess of \$500,000,000 in financing to facilitate these transactions.

Featured Restaurants

[D'Jais Bar and Grill](#); [Giamano's Ristorante](#) ; [Johnny Piancone's](#); [Ninette's Italian Restaurant](#); [Harpoon Willy's](#); [Langosta Lounge](#); [Tommy's Coal Fired Pizza](#); [My Kitchen Witch](#); [Tavolo Pronto](#); [The Chapter House](#); [Savoring the Shore](#); [Basile's Restaurant](#); [The Bar Room & Grill](#); [The Cheese Cave](#); [San Remo](#); [Monticello Restaurant](#); [Shipwreck Point](#); [The River Watch](#); [Tipperary Pub](#); [Michael Angelo's](#); [Forte Restaurant](#); [Indulge Lounge](#); [The Sitting Duck](#); [Solo Trattoria](#); [Windward Tavern](#); [Brennen's Steakhouse](#); [Salt Creek Grille](#); [La Dolce Vita](#); [Mossuto's Market & Café](#); [Prohibition](#); [Danny's Steakhouse & Sushi](#); [Rella's Italian Restaurant](#); [Rooney's Oceanfront Restaurant](#); [MJ's Pizza Bar & Grill](#); [O'Connor's American Bar & Grill](#); [New Jersey Restaurant & Hospitality Association](#); [Johnny Mac House of Spirits](#); [Christine's Italian Ristorante](#); [Manny's Pizza, Subs, & Salads](#); [Stone Mandia, LLC](#); [Breakers Kitchen & Tap](#); [B2 Bistro + Bar](#); [Charley's Ocean Grill](#); [Fleming White Appraisals](#); [Nettie's House of Spaghetti](#)

The Summer Party...



D'JAIS BAR AND GRILL BELMAR, NJ

D'Jais Bar and Grill is one of the most talked about venues at the Jersey Shore. Open since 1979, owner's Bill Luddecke, Frank Sementa, and Louis "Kipp" Connor purchased the bar and transformed a college hang-out into a Jersey Shore happening. What once was known as the place to go to hear live bands and have a few beers has become the dance party craze at the shore, with dance music, theme nights and a total party atmosphere. The beachfront bar, only open from May to November, gathers larger crowds than any other spot in the area.

Below is a recent interview with owners Bill Luddecke and Frank Sementa talking about the rise of *D'Jais* and how it gained its popularity.

Bielat Santore and Company (BSC): Why did you choose this location?

Luddecke: The band I managed, Holme, of which Frank and Kipp were members, played here for 8-12 years. The owner always said to me, "When I retire I think you (Luddecke) would be a good fit."

D'JAIS BAR AND GRILL

BELMAR, NJ

BSC: What was your original vision for *D'Jais*?

Luddecke: Our vision was to move away from a beer joint and make it more of a dance club.

BSC: What was it like when it first opened?

Luddecke: From day one it was a place where all the college kids home for the summer hung out.

"We're injecting fun into this place all day long"

BSC: Why do people come here now? What makes *D'Jais* different from any other bar?

Sementa: Number 1: LOCATION; We are across the street from the beach and the ocean. Number 2: As owners, we are here 24/7. Number 3: We make people have FUN when they come through the doors. It's all based on hospitality, creating an atmosphere where people can enjoy themselves.

BSC: Seems like almost every night of the week there is something going on at *D'Jais*. Does that help your business?

Sementa: People want a diversion from the burdens of life. This is not just a place where you sit at the bar and have a drink. We entertain you. That makes for a fun night. We're injecting fun into this place all day long.

Luddecke/Sementa: I don't know of any other nightclub whose owners have been entertainers for their entire adult lives. We came from the entertainment part of the business. We were in clubs almost every night. By the time we bought this place we were seasoned entertainers and knew what to do to make it good.

BSC: What has been the biggest change in your business?

Sementa: There hasn't been a lot of change. The business is more the same than it's changed. We have customers who start coming when they are 21 and they are still coming at 30 and 40 years old. Having fun is what it is based on, that hasn't changed.

D'JAIS BAR AND GRILL

BELMAR, NJ

BSC: What is your strategy? Do you look at other bars and try to find out how to do better than them?

Luddecke/Sementa: We don't worry about anybody else. There is not much competition on the oceanfront. On our social media site somebody once said that *D'Jais* is a lifestyle choice. The original idea is to get the crowd all together in one room and get them charged up for the summer. It's all about the crowd and making them have a good time.

BSC: Is there anything you wish you could change or still want to do?

Luddecke: I'm comfortable the way it is. It's not too big, it's not too small. We're never satisfied, that's why we keep trying to make it better.

BSC: Name one word to describe *D'Jais*.

"I don't know of any other nightclub whose owners have been entertainers for their entire adult lives"

Sementa: FUN, FUN, FUN, FUN!

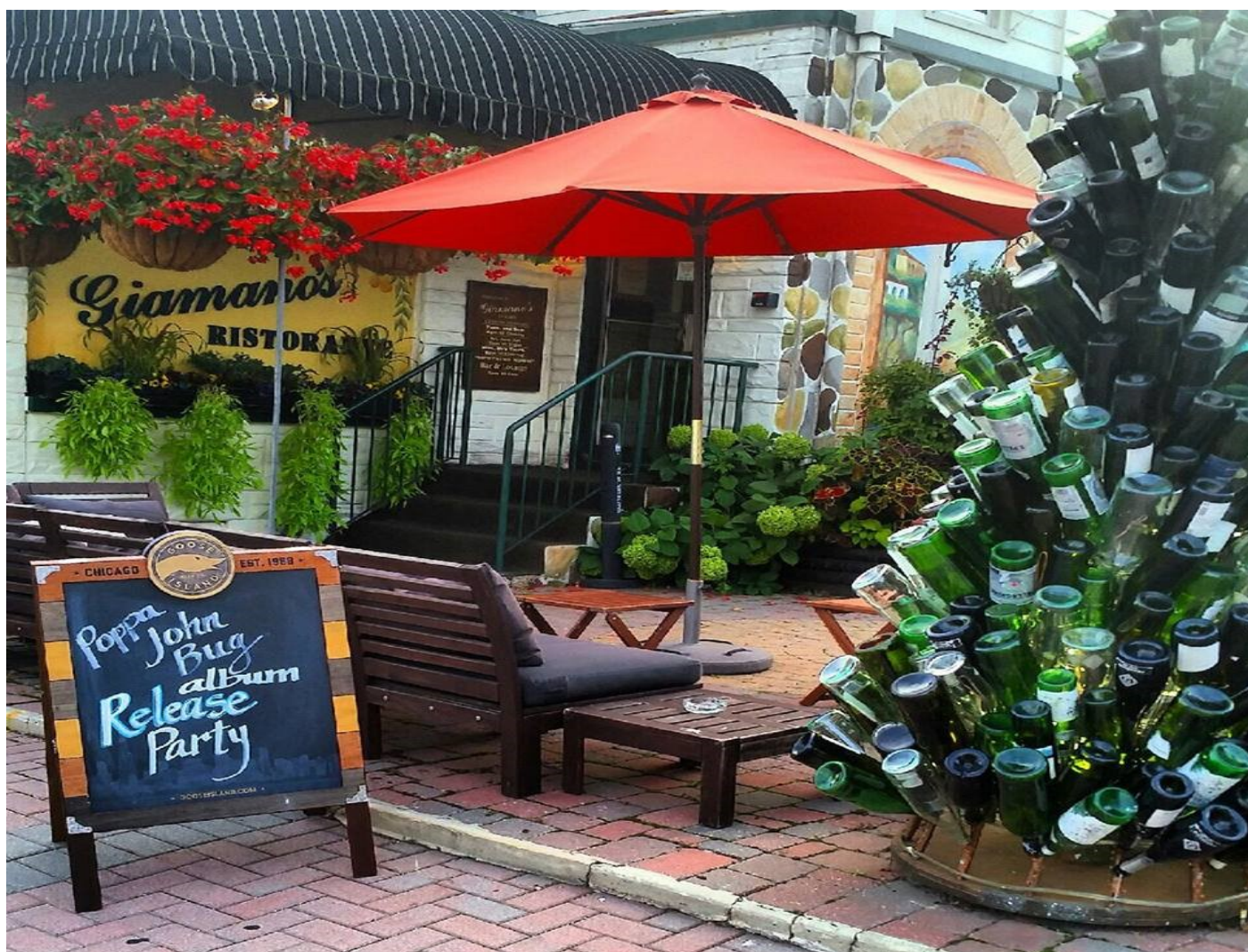
For those who can't wait for *D'Jais* to open in the summer, twice a year *D'Jais* goes to Atlantic City. One weekend in November and one weekend in February, *D'Jais* brings its entire dance party act to Harrah's Casino. They host holiday and winter related theme nights where guests can dance the night away, just like at *D'Jais*, Belmar. *D'Jais* owners are looking at doing the same thing in Las Vegas in the future.

D'Jais Bar and Grill is located at 1801 Ocean Avenue in Belmar, New Jersey and is open 7 days a week, 11:00 am to 2:00 pm. Visit their website for additional information at <http://www.djais.com/> call 732-681-5055 or e-mail info@djais.com.



Turn page for Giamano's Ristorante

The Family Restaurant...



GIAMANO'S RISTORANTE BRADLEY BEACH, NJ

Family is most important when it comes to the Manno family, owners of the traditional old-school Italian restaurant, *Giamano's Ristorante* located at 301 Main Street, Bradley Beach, New Jersey. The family-run restaurant provides a friendly environment and serves some of the best Italian cuisine at the Jersey Shore. *Giamano's Ristorante* has been creating delicious meals for almost 30 years. Rhonda Manno currently runs the restaurant with her son and *Giamano's* chef, Steffan Manno and her daughter Adriana who is the general manager. They took over the business, originally named Balducci's by Rhonda's in-laws, Joseph and Antoinette Manno after Rhonda's husband Frank passed away. With the help of the rest of the Manno family and their team including, co-executive chef Peter Patagno, *Giamano's Ristorante* has become one of the most popular Italian restaurants in the area. Here's their story:

GIAMANO'S RISTORANTE

BRADLEY BEACH, NJ

Bielat Santore & Company (BSC): Is everything you make here homemade?

Steffan Manno: All is homemade and from scratch. Our mantra is the only way you make a good product is to start with good ingredients.

BSC: You do a great deal for the community. What has inspired you to help as much as you do?

Rhonda Manno: It started out with Steffan serving meals to the needy in the Asbury Park Fire House every Thanksgiving and Christmas. When it got too big we had to move it to the Salvation Army building where it continued to date.

Steffan Manno: We don't call it a soup kitchen; it's more of a party and a celebration. Many of our customers come out and volunteer. We also give out clothes, coats, hats, gloves and toys.

Rhonda Manno: We also do a benefit for the Monmouth County Food Bank. We close the restaurant, sell tickets, and donate all proceeds to the Food Bank. Our Servers are willing to volunteer their time and help.

BSC: Do you sell any of your homemade recipes that you use at the restaurant?

Steffan Manno: We make fresh mozzarella daily and sell a lot of that. We also jar and label our homemade tomato sauce for sale. We are marketing our sauces in some local food markets. Our ultimate goal

"Our mantra is the only way you make a good product is to start with good ingredients"

is to get it going nationally in supermarkets.

BSC: What is your most popular dish at your restaurant?

GIAMANO'S RISTORANTE

BRADLEY BEACH, NJ

Rhonda Manno: Our Chicken Savoy. Our customers really love that dish and they always rave about it.

BSC: Where did your recipes come from? Are they Italian secrets passed down from generations?

Steffan Manno: Most of our recipes have been passed down by family over the years and all of our recipes are homemade. The ricotta cheesecake is my grandmother's recipe from years ago. People go crazy for the cheesecake!

BSC: Do you have any special promotions?

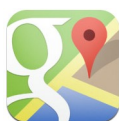
Rhonda Manno: Yes. Tuesday night is "customer appreciation night" where customers receive a 50% discount on all menu items (excluding liquor). Every Sunday (except holidays): children under 10 years old who order off the Children's Menu eat FREE after 4:00pm; Kurt the Magical Entertainer entertains the children with a magic show at 5:30pm; various bands perform for our Summer Outdoor Music Series every Sunday in our outdoor area from 4:30pm-8:30pm.

BSC: Who do you consider your biggest competition in the area?

Rhonda Manno: No one. Even people that talk about going to other places come back and tell us we're still the best!

Giamano's Ristorante offers outdoor dining late night entertainment every Friday and Saturday night in their upstairs lounge featuring local Jazz, Latin, and Reggae bands. *Giamano's* has recently added an outdoor bocce court and intend to start a Wednesday night bocce league.

Visit *Giamano's Ristorante* located at 301 Main Street, Bradley Beach, New Jersey; open every day for dinner except Mondays. Check them out on an array of social media websites including Facebook, Twitter and Foursquare. Contact them by phone, 732.775.4275, e-mail, rhonda@giamanos.com, or visit their website for more information <http://www.giamanos.com>.



Turn page for Johnny Piancone's

A Father's Legacy...



JOHNNY PIANCONE'S LONG BRANCH, NJ

An Italian favorite makes a comeback opening its doors in a not so familiar location. John Piancone Sr. first had the idea of opening an Italian Specialty Store and Bakery in 1955 in Bradley Beach, New Jersey. His vision expanded nearly 40 years later when his son Rick Piancone opened a family restaurant with his wife called *La Nonna Piancone's Café* on the same block adjacent to his father's store. Dedicating so much of his time to the café, Rick decided to sell the business in 2006 and took some time off to travel. In November 2009, Rick returned to the industry launching *Johnny Piancone's* in Long Branch, New Jersey, named after his father who passed away. Currently in its fourth year of business, *Johnny Piancone's* continues to satisfy customers, serving great Italian food and keeping the family name alive. Owner Rick Piancone explains his journey:

Bielat Santore & Company (BSC): Is everything you make here homemade?

Piancone: Yes. Cooking is all done in-house. I graduated from the Culinary Institute of America where I met one of our head chefs, Sal who has been with us since the deli in Bradley Beach. Our other head chef, Jose has also been with us since the deli. As customers walk in, they can see our chefs making fresh antipasto and mozzarella in the kitchen. All deserts are made in-house too.

BSC: Did you get an inspiration for your recipes while traveling?

Piancone: Going to Italy and seeing all of the little mom and pop shops and manufacturers made me realize that we take a lot of food that we have for granted. It gave me a lot of appreciation for it.

BSC: What is a signature dish that you serve?

"Going to Italy and seeing all of the little mom and pop shops and manufacturers made me realize that we take a lot of food that we have for granted. It gave me a lot of appreciation for it"

Piancone: The "No-Name Salad" is a big one. It has grilled chicken, mozzarella, roasted red pepper, grilled vegetables, mushrooms, artichoke and mixed greens tossed in a balsamic gorgonzola dressing. Also the "Chicken La Nonna" is very popular, egg battered chicken breast topped with fresh mozzarella, basil and prosciutto, sautéed in a lemon white wine butter.

BSC: Does *Johnny Piancone's* resemble your previous restaurant, *La Nonna Piancone's Café* in Bradley Beach?

JOHNNY PIANCONE'S

LONG BRANCH, NJ

Piancone: We kept the same menu. Prices are the only thing that has changed. The bartenders have been getting more creative with the alcoholic beverages. We want our customers to enjoy a fun atmosphere with fine food at reasonable prices.

BSC: What does La Nonna mean?

Piancone: It's Italian for "Grandmother."

BSC: Do you have any special promotions?

We are not your typical chicken parmesan restaurant. We see the trends of the business changing and we try to keep up with the trends.

Piancone: We are open 7 days a week. Monday through Saturday is all-day Happy Hour from 2:00 pm – 7:00 pm and Sundays from 4:00 pm – 9:00 pm. Our Early Bird Dinner is every night from 4:00 pm – 6:30 pm offering a four course meal. We also have an upstairs banquet room that holds up to 80 guests. We book for all kinds of occasions such as baptisms, communions, birthday parties, and repasts.

BSC: What makes you different from other Italian restaurants in the area?

Piancone: We are not your typical chicken parmesan restaurant. We see the trends of the business changing and we try to keep up with the trends. We still love the business and have a passion for it. I go to Manhattan a lot and see what other restaurants are doing and I try to bring some of what I see there to Johnny Piancone's.

BSC: What type of advertising are you doing?

JOHNNY PIANCONE'S LONG BRANCH, NJ

Piancone: Social media is really helpful. Yelp is great because it lets us know how we are doing and if we get a bad review it lets us know what we need to fix. The advertising campaign "Stronger than the Storm" has boosted our business too since Hurricane Sandy

BSC: Who do you consider your biggest competition in the area?

Piancone: Pier Village. I have to compete with all of the places there. We can't compete with the ocean view but we can compete with their prices.

Johnny Piancone's is located at 591 Broadway in Long Branch, New Jersey. Open 7 days a week for lunch and dinner: Monday through Thursday from 2:00 pm – 10:00 pm, Friday & Saturday from 11:30 am – 11:00 pm, and Sunday from 4:00 pm – 9:00 pm. Guests are encouraged to take advantage of their private banquet room equipped with flat screen televisions and a full-service bar. Visit their website for more information at <http://www.johnnypiancone.com/menu/>.



Turn page for Ninette's Italian Restaurant

A Pizza Veteran...



NINETTE'S ITALIAN RESTAURANT TINTON FALLS, NJ

It all started in 1979 when two Italian brothers opened a restaurant that would bring families together around the dinner table again. Six years later, the two parted ways leaving one brother and current owner, Paul Crecenti to manage *Ninette's Italian Restaurant* located in Tinton Falls, New Jersey. Immigrating to the United States from Italy at a young age, Crecenti incorporates what he learned through his experiences in America along with his own family recipes to add diversity to his menu. After 34 years serving familiar faces including late Italian TV mobster and New Jersey native, James Gandolfini, *Ninette's Italian Restaurant* has maintained a robust presence in Central New Jersey. Crecenti tells us what has kept him going for all these years:

Bielat Santore and Company (BSC): What got you started in the restaurant industry?

NINETTE'S ITALIAN RESTAURANT

TINTON FALLS, NJ

Paul Crecenti: I always enjoyed cooking, so after high school I learned how to make pizza. I worked in Brooklyn and then came to New Jersey in 1969 and worked at a few different places for ten years before opening *Ninette's Italian Restaurant*.

BSC: Where did you get your inspiration for your recipes?

Crecenti: My inspiration came from me working with different chefs from different places and after a while I started creating different dishes. A lot of my recipes I learned from my mother. Most everything is homemade. We don't buy much pre-made.

BSC: Do your customers have a particular favorite dish?

Crecenti: Pizza of course is #1 and then I create all different dishes. It is mostly a family restaurant. I've built up relationships for so many years that by the weekend everyone eats here.

BSC: What gets your customers to keep coming back?

Crecenti: Number 1; the relationship. After a while they become a friend, which is why we always create different dishes to attract them. If they ask us to make them something that is not listed on the menu, we make it for them to make them feel more comfortable and like they are a guest on my home.

BSC: What is a typical day at *Ninette's* like?

Crecenti: Weekends are very busy but the atmosphere is very relaxed. We get people going in and out but it's very relaxed.

BSC: How did you find this location?

Crecenti: We liked this area because it was close to Fort Monmouth. Thirty-four years ago this shopping center used to be like a flea market. Originally the restaurant was only 2,000 square feet.

NINETTE'S ITALIAN RESTAURANT

TINTON FALLS, NJ

We needed more room for all the people coming from Fort Monmouth, so when the hairdresser next door to us went out of business, we expanded. Unfortunately, Fort Monmouth closed in 2011.

BSC: Do you serve a lot of locals or do you see different faces every day?

Crecenti: We see the same people coming back day after day, but we also get new people as well.

BSC: What is your favorite thing about owning an Italian restaurant?

Crecenti: The people, the relationships with them. I'll miss that. It becomes like a family. You know people by name and they become close friends.

BSC: Who is your biggest competition?

Crecenti: We don't try to compete with other restaurants. After so many years you build up rapport with your customers so that every week you constantly get people coming back. We never did much advertising. Advertising is a lot of money and I didn't think it was useful. I'd rather donate food. I feel like once people taste my food they know what they're going to get. It is better than being told where to go.

Ninette's Italian Restaurant invites customers to come and enjoy musical entertainment every Saturday night from 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm. They also have on and off-premise catering services and host special events such as parties, christenings, and graduations upon reservation. *Ninette's Italian Restaurant* is located at 908 Shrewsbury Avenue, Tinton Falls, New Jersey 07724. Lunch and dinner hours are Tuesday – Thursday from 10:00 am – 10:00 pm and weekends from 11:00 am – 10:00 pm. They are closed on Mondays.



Turn page for Harpoon Willy's

A Waterfront Tavern...



HARPOON WILLY'S MANASQUAN, NJ

Good service, delicious food, and a waterfront view is enough to keep customers coming back to *Harpoon Willy's Tavern & Waterfront Restaurant* year after year. Originally a stage coach stop located at a desolate Jersey Shore area in the 1700s, the local favorite became a popular restaurant and bar that has continued to tantalize resident's taste buds. The eatery's original name was "The Red Ranch," but current owners, Jim Scarponi, John Kitrick, and Jack Kane purchased it several years ago after the name had been changed to *Harpoon Willy's*.

Owner Jim Scarponi talks a bit about the food at the restaurant that keeps patrons coming back. "Most of the food is made fresh. We try not to cut corners and use fresh products. People seem to like everything on the menu. From seafood to burgers and sandwiches, people like variety. The burgers get great reviews."

HARPOON WILLY'S

MANASQUAN, NJ

Guests revel in weekly specials such as Taco Tuesdays, Wednesday Clambakes, and periodic wine dinners. Featuring a live band every Thursday, Friday and Saturday night, has helped *Harpoon Willy's* move up the ladder in customer appreciation.

"We definitely do a lot of parties as well; they are very popular," Scarponi continues about the private party room at the restaurant.

Although it is not too far from many summer vacation spots, Harpoon Willy's draws a loyal local crowd. "We see mainly locals and seasonal locals here," said Scarponi. "We are off the tourist path so we don't see too many tourists. We don't peak in the summer and then die," says co-owner Kitrick. "We generally have steady business all year round. "We also accept reservations so we show a lot of loyalty to local residents," said Scarponi.

While keeping an eye out on waterfront dining during the summer months, the partners are not too concerned with competition in the area. "We are always trying to change things to get better," said Scarponi. "We definitely want to continue to grow, change and keep our customers completely satisfied."

Be sure to go to the *Harpoon Willy's* from November 8-17th. The restaurant will be participating in the 5th Anniversary of New Jersey Restaurant Week. Visit the company's website for more details <http://jerseyshorerestaurantweek.com>.

Harpoon Willy's Tavern & Waterfront Restaurant is located at 2655 River Road, Manasquan, New Jersey 08736. Open seven days a week for lunch and dinner including a late night bar menu. Live entertainment begins on Thursday at 8:30 pm and Fridays at 9:00 pm. Their private room is open to the public for up to 25 guests and off-site catering is available as well. For additional information, call 732.233.8880 or visit their website <http://www.harpoonwillys.com>.



Turn page for Langosta Lounge

Boardwalk Cuisine...



LANGOSTA LOUNGE ASBURY PARK, NJ

"I definitely think it is important to give assistance to businesses that support the bigger picture, especially post Hurricane Sandy," said Marilyn Schlossbach, owner of *Langosta Lounge* in Asbury Park, New Jersey and several other sister restaurants in and around Monmouth County, New Jersey. The self-taught chef has been wowing customers since 1982 with her unique culturally-mixed dishes inspired by her love of traveling. After devoting years perfecting her recipes, Schlossbach now has a string of successful restaurants along the New Jersey shore, while at the same time, staying involved with a slew of community organizations.

Spending much of her life exploring the globe and surfing with her husband, Schlossbach was able to create the "vacation cuisine" that she is known for. "Our big passion is to travel and visit different places and we mix the cultures together," said Schlossbach.

LANGOSTA LOUNGE

ASBURY PARK, NJ

A chef has to be able to do a lot more than just make a good meal according to Schlossbach. "The creative part of the chef I believe you are born with; a great chef has to be able to have an operational side and be able to run and manage a business as well," said Schlossbach. "The best chefs that I have worked with are people that are like sponges. They can do it all and they have no boundaries."

The cooking enthusiast also believes that being personable and inter-

"We are very creative people always thinking about a new project once one ends"

acting with her customers is one of the best ways to attract a crowd. "Having more of a personal connection with not just your staff but your atmosphere and your food makes your venue more approachable," said Schlossbach. Being heavily involved in the community is a passion for her and she encourages every business owner to do the same. "Who I am as a person keeps customers coming back," said Schlossbach.



"Everyone needs to stay true to who they are. People come to my restaurants because of the community work that I do just as much as for the food I create."

Schlossbach's community work includes collaborating with Interfaith Neighbors on Asbury Park's *Kula Café*, community gardening and surf lessons with the Boys and Girls Club of Asbury Park, and supporting environmental organizations like Clean Ocean Action that works to protect coastlines and marine environments.

LANGOSTA LOUNGE

ASBURY PARK, NJ

The entrepreneur has tried to slow down her overwhelming schedule to make time to be able to do everything that she wants to do. "This year, we have made an effort not to grow until we are stable," said Schlossbach. "We are very creative people always thinking about a new project once one ends."

"Everyone needs to stay true to who they are. People come to my restaurants because of the community work that I do just as much as for the food I create."

Langosta Lounge is the most popular restaurant in her food chain. Each of her restaurants' menus change to coincide with her customer's seasonal food interests. As an example, of experiencing a variety of different cultures on one plate, her fall menu provides more selections of comfort food while in the winter the meals are heartier with more filling options.

"We may not be the most creative people anywhere, but I'd like to believe we are in that top tier," said Schlossbach. "We try to encourage others to get creative. The more people that get creative, the more people that come into the area."

Langosta Lounge is located at 1000 Ocean Avenue, Asbury Park, NJ 07712. Recently reopened after Hurricane Sandy, the restaurant opens at 12:00 pm every day except Sundays where brunch begins at 11:30 am. The bar serves guests as late as 12:00 am. Other eateries owned by Marilyn Schlossbach include: *The Labrador Lounge* in Lavallette, NJ, *Pop's Garage* in Asbury Park and Normandy Beach, NJ, and the *Dauphin Grille*, *Kitschen's Catering*, *Lightly Salted*, and *Libby's* all in Asbury Park, NJ. Visit her website for additional information <http://www.marilynschlossbach.com>.



Turn page for Tommy's Coal Fired Pizza

The Pizza King...



TOMMY'S COAL FIRED PIZZA RED BANK, NJ

Not in his wildest dreams did Tommy Bonfiglio, a former attorney and Brooklyn native think that his pizzeria, *Tommy's Coal Fired Pizza Restaurant & Bar* would soar into one of the best homemade pizza shops in New Jersey. When the first restaurant opened its doors in 2009 in Red Bank, New Jersey, people fell in love with the great taste of coal fired pizza. Today, Bonfiglio owns three *Tommy's Coal Fired Pizza* restaurants with other locations in Brick, New Jersey and Paramus, New Jersey, and he is still looking to expand.

Spending twenty-five years as an attorney, Bonfiglio wanted a change and he also wanted to partner up with his wife Yvette, in a new business venture. Putting his briefcase aside, he decided to turn his love for pizza into a career. "Pizza is my passion," said Bonfiglio. "I wanted to do pizza my way."

TOMMY'S COAL FIRED PIZZA

RED BANK, NJ

My daughter Andrea is also involved in our business and helps out with social media, online promotions, and coming up with weekly specials. "This is not work, it is a passion," said Bonfiglio. "We go home and that's all we talk about. We love it!"

Before discovering that perfect recipe, Bonfiglio spent months researching pizza from the crust to the order of the sauce and cheese, finally settling on the delicious recipe that customers are crazy about. "I loved food and I loved pizza and finding the perfect taste took months of eating pizza," said Bonfiglio. "I tried 9,000 different cheeses, sauces and dough's. Sometimes I didn't like the sauces and the cheeses. It was a whole trial and error process."

So what's the big secret behind his popular pizza creation? "The quicker you cook a pizza, the better it tastes," said Bonfiglio. "Nothing in my restaurant is older than three days old. I don't have a freezer in this entire restaurant. I can't hide behind bad ingredients. Everything is fresh, fresh, fresh!"

Tommy's Coal Fired Pizza is known for more than just its savory pies. Other crowd favorites include an array of pastas, sandwiches and coal fired roasted



wings. "I sell more wings than chicken places do," said Bonfiglio. The restaurant has received numerous awards for their food. It was named Pizza Today's 2013 Top 100 and received 2nd place for New Jersey Monthly Magazine for the best wings in New Jersey. "It is very rewarding to get that recognition," said Bonfiglio. "We have won lots of local competitions as well."

TOMMY'S COAL FIRED PIZZA

RED BANK, NJ

Tommy Bonfiglio and his wife Yvette are also involved with several organizations such as *The Ashley Lauren Foundation*, Lakewood Blue Claws, Shoreline Media Marketing, *Kidz 4 Kidz*, Count Basie Theatre, The Two Rivers Theatre Company, and Red Bank Armory. Teaming up with the *Ashley Lauren Foundation*, *Tommy's Coal Fired Pizza* holds *Tommy's Family and Children of the Month*, where every month the duo picks one child/family in need and work together to solicit donations for them. Many of these families are suffering with a child who has cancer or another illness. "We hate cancer; we like kids so we figured we'd get involved," said Bonfiglio. "This is all about having fun and giving back."

The pizzeria has also worked closely with famous names like Buddy Valastro, owner of Carlo's Bakery from TLC's *Cake Boss*, Mike "The Situation" Sorrentino from MTV's *Jersey Shore*, and Queen Latifah who

"We hate cancer; we like kids so we figured we'd get involved. This is all about having fun and giving back."

have helped with their charity events. "We want these kids to have a great experience," said Bonfiglio.

With plans to open more *Tommy's Coal Fired Pizza's* outside of New Jersey, Bonfiglio is considering making the eatery a franchise. "After three and one-half years, I feel I'm now ready to offer franchises," said Bonfiglio. So many people have asked me to do it and I feel like I'm finally ready.

Tommy's Coal Fired Pizza Restaurant & Bar is open for lunch, dinner and drinks from 11:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m. on week days; open later on the weekends. Take-out and delivery is also available. Visit them at their various locations: 2 Bridge Avenue, Red Bank, New Jersey; 515 Route 70, Brick, New Jersey; 700 Paramus Park, Paramus, New Jersey. Visit their website and social media pages for additional information on weekly specials and coupons <http://tommyscoalfiredpizza.com/>.



Turn page for My Kitchen Witch

The Healthy Choice...



MY KITCHEN WITCH MONMOUTH BEACH, NJ

Where can you get scrumptious meals that are healthy, low fat, gluten free and you can bring your dog? *My Kitchen Witch* located in Monmouth Beach, NJ offers just that. Owner and executive chef, Karyn Jarmer creates nutritious dishes in her small Jersey Shore restaurant while continuing to work with well-known entertainers in her catering business.

With nutrition always on her brain, Jarmer developed a dining experience that everyone can enjoy. Open for breakfast and lunch, *My Kitchen Witch* makes eating healthy easy with their grab n' go selections at the *Magical Market* and *Magic Potion Juice Bar* that have a variety of smoothies and juices for a daily dose of fruits and vegetables, and a full service dining area.

MY KITCHEN WITCH

MONMOUTH BEACH, NJ

"Every day we would get involved in something else," says Jarmer. "There are great bars in the area with different food but what we do is different. The need is here." The eatery also has an outdoor patio area that seats up to forty people and is dog-friendly.

Growing up in New Jersey and having to transition to the New York City lifestyle, there were many things that Jarmer looked forward to upon settling back in New Jersey. "Being in the city for so long, I missed the community and family so I wanted to make the restaurant more customer-friendly," continues Jarmer. "You don't get to see it like that in the city." Her decision to relocate was also due to the tragic terrorist attack on the Twin Towers on September 11, 2001. "After 9/11 it became very difficult mentally, spiritually and emotionally. That was the worst thing ever," states Jarmer. "I lived in one of the biggest cities in the world and I never felt so alone."

Eight years after opening *My Kitchen Witch*, Hurricane Sandy came through devastating much of the Jersey Shore causing the restaurant to close for six months. "There was never a doubt that I wouldn't leave here and rebuild. "We were getting a lot of people who were coming by not for food but to make sure that we were okay and to see the damage. This is why I picked this town, because of this community." When asked if she would consider expanding her restaurant to other locations, she responded without hesitation. "I would expand more south," said Jarmer, in an effort to escape the flood zones. "Bad things happen everywhere."

Jarmer has certainly made a name for herself in the food and beverage industry with her catering business. *My Kitchen Witch*, formerly known as *Bedrock Catering*, has bounced out of the mouths of many respected people in entertainment. With a long list of talented clients, she has had the pleasure of cooking for performers such as Elton John, Beyonce and John Mayer to name a few. She even got the opportunity to cater for the Pope. "The restaurant was slow in the beginning and when I catered for the Pope that put me back in business," says Jarmer. "It's crazy how even though I'm so far away, people are still calling me to cater."

MY KITCHEN WITCH

MONMOUTH BEACH, NJ

Everything from her food to her design is completely original. The entire menu contains homemade comfort food including a healthier spin on desserts. All the art painted on the tables are hand-painted by a local artist. There are also pictures and crafts hanging from the walls that were gifts, mostly emulating the film, The Wizard of Oz.

"Catering is so much different than owning a restaurant. With catering I know exactly how much food I will need and how many people I will be serving. At the restaurant you don't know what the day is going to be like, but I love it." Quoting her favorite line from The Wizard of Oz, "there's no place like home."

My Kitchen Witch is open seven days a week from 8:00 am – 2:30 pm at 29 Beach Road, Monmouth Beach, NJ. Dinner is served on Friday evenings until 9:00 pm. At \$25 a person, dinner includes a 3-course meal by candlelight with unlimited por-



tions that change weekly. Alcohol is BYOB only. Reservations are preferred. Visit the restaurant's website for additional information <http://www.mykitchenwitch.com/>.



Turn Page for Tavolo Pronto

The After School Favorite...



TAVOLO PRONTO FAIR HAVEN, NJ

It can be difficult to locate a kid-friendly restaurant anymore which refuses to include happy food plus jungle gyms. At *Tavolo Pronto* inside Fair Haven, New Jersey, owners Arturo plus Patti Balderas, create kids the goal by having balanced food ready plus willing to go. The casual-themed eatery has "grab plus go" service and also in-house eating, creating a busy function or school day simpler to deal with.

The authentic chef at the past *Tavolo Restaurant* inside Long Branch, New Jersey, Arturo Balderas plus his spouse Patti grew to love the restaurant company thus much which whenever *Tavolo* shut its doorways, they bought its sister café, *Tavolo Pronto* (meaning "Table Ready" in Italian) . Patti, a professional pastry chef for twenty years that worked inside many hotels plus diners plus Arturo a dishwasher before functioning his method as much as becoming a head chef, built a destination where families plus kids see frequently.

TAVOLO PRONTO

FAIR HAVEN, NJ

"Whatever it was intended to be, it morphed into just what it is now," mentioned Patti. Before taking over, *Tavolo* was recognized as an eat-in café, thus the addition of take-out as well as the snack bar at Tavolo Pronto became a big hit. "Lunch is the big thing," continues Patti. "People come inside a lot for take-out dinners too." The menu involves a extended list of omelets, panini's, breakfast sandwiches, plus pastries for early risers. Whenever school lets out for lunch, the region crowds with orders of homemade pizza, salads plus soups. Assorted pastas plus meats are served throughout the dinner rush.

"It's a tight community plus this really is a neighborhood company," mentioned Patti. "We learn almost all of the shoppers by name plus

"Moms responsibility is to ensure their kids have a wise lunch; rather them pack it, we do"

what they like." The neighborhood eatery additionally sponsors softball plus baseball groups plus has creative writing pieces by regional pupils shown inside the shop. Their close relationship with all the universities has encouraged parents to purchase their kids lunches as well as the staff packs plus delivers those to the school throughout lunch hr. "Moms responsibility is to ensure their kids have a wise lunch; rather them pack it, we do," states Patti. "We pack every individually inside bags plus write everyone's name about every bag. We've had parents stick notes inside their kid's bags whenever they come inside for their morning coffee."

This time of year is top because countless university pupils flood back to town for the getaway break. "It's absolutely good this time of year whenever the university kids return inside town," mentioned Patti. "They

"Whatever it was intended to be, it morphed into just what it is now"

come here plus exchange presents plus catch up with every additional. Everyone is truly friendly plus I like seeing a great deal of friendly encounters."

TAVOLO PRONTO

FAIR HAVEN, NJ

The weekend dinner menu varies every week. The café additionally caters private parties including delivery plus set up. For Thanksgiving there is a full menu featuring a 10-14 lb. roast poultry, with bread stuffing as well as the customer's choice of greens, dish, potatoes plus desserts. The food feeds 8-10 persons at a cost of \$ 195.00. Guests should pre-order no later than November 25th.



Tavolo Pronto is positioned at 610 River Road, Fair Haven, New Jersey. The café is open Monday from Wednesday from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm; Thursday by Saturday till 10 pm. On Sundays, the hours are from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. To put an purchase, call 732.741.6009. Daily menu plus specials is viewed online at <http://tavolopronto.com/>.



Turn page for The Chapter House

A Family Establishment...



THE CHAPTER HOUSE HOWELL, NJ

"We are closed" is not a phrase used often for the owners of the family run restaurants *The Chapter House* and *The Ivy League*, both located on Route 9 in Howell Township, New Jersey. Offering food and drink specials every night until 1:00 am, the Jaspan family is always welcoming customers in its doors. After closing for two and a half months for renovation, *The Chapter House* is firing up the grill again inviting guests to see its fresh new makeover.

The Ivy League was first purchased by the Jaspan's nearly six and a half years ago before the family purchased its sister restaurant, *The Chapter House* on Route 9 South, in 2012, ten days before Hurricane Sandy devastated the area. "The Ivy League, on Route 9 North is very convenient for a lot of people but both restaurants get a lot of locals and regulars coming in," said Tom Jaspan, owner. "We have customers that like *The Ivy League* more than *The Chapter House* and the other way around as well."

THE CHAPTER HOUSE

HOWELL, NJ

After remodeling *The Ivy League* three years ago, *The Chapter House* has recently been redone as well. Guests now enjoy new high-definition televisions, a state of the art audio visual system, new flooring, painted walls and ceilings. "To make money you have to put money back in," said Jaspan. Some customers have mixed feelings about the change of scenery. "People liked the old look because it felt more at home," continues Jaspan. "It's a matter of people getting used to it. Whatever you do people are going to complain about it. I've had a ton of people say that they like it."

The grand re-opening of *The Chapter House* featured a two hour free buffet, entertainment, and a ribbon cutting witnessed by the Chamber

"To make money you have to put money back in"

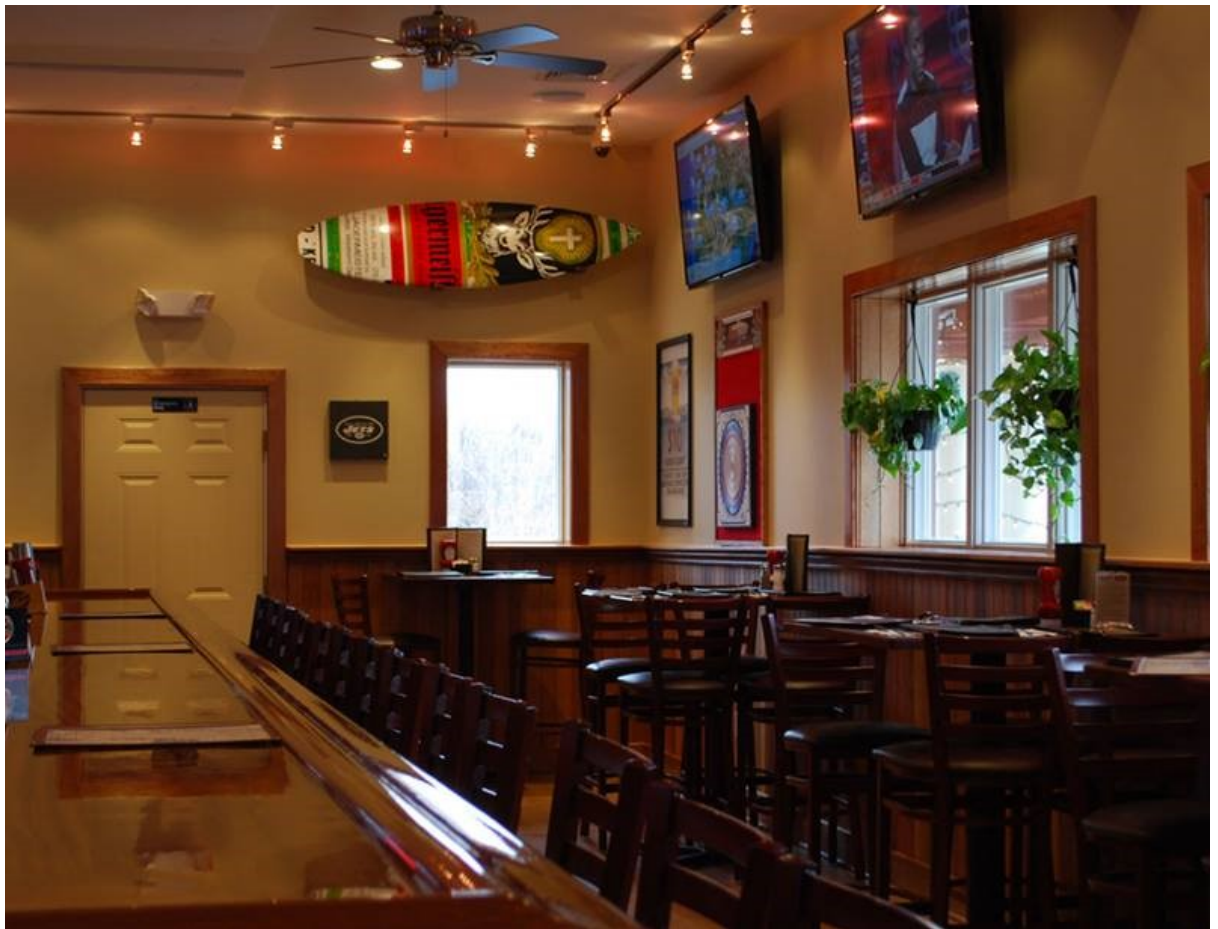
of Commerce and the Deputy Mayor. "All local businesses were invited," said Jaspan. "It turned out to be a good event."

Both eateries host special holiday celebrations including a Mother's Day Brunch and an Easter Brunch. "Every year it seems to get better and better," said Jaspan. During Saint Patrick's Day at *The Chapter House*, the restaurant goes through 100,000 pounds of corn beef to accommodate the large crowd. They also have a New Year's Eve bash each year. "I don't believe in closing," said Jaspan. "We're family owned and we only close on Thanksgiving and Christmas Day because those are family days."

Other events they help sponsor are an annual benefit golf outing supporting diabetes, wings provider for the Lakewood Blue Claws games during Thirsty Thursdays at the stadium, and charitable events for the Howell schools. "I try to stay focused on what's going on in the area," said Jaspan. They also make contributions to the *Brennan Association*, honoring a customer's son who lost his leg in the war. During this fundraiser, they donate beer and give a check in the amount of \$25,000 to other veterans in need.

THE CHAPTER HOUSE HOWELL, NJ

Featuring similar menu's *The Ivy League* and *The Chapter House* both open at 11:00 am Monday through Saturday and at 12:00 pm on Sundays. With two separate dining rooms for parties of up to fifty people in each, they cater events such as banquets, holiday parties, repasses, wedding showers and the like. Take-out is also available. Visit their websites for more information <http://www.chapterhousenj.com/index.html> and <http://www.ivyleaguegrill.com/>.



Turn page for Savoring the Shore

Restore the Shore Volunteers...

SAVORING THE SHORE POINT PLEASANT, NJ

Watching their neighborhood get swept up in the Jersey Shore's second worst storm in history was disheartening for Point Pleasant resident, Cheryl Larkin and her daughter Kate Kurelja. In an effort to aid Hurricane Sandy victims, they decided to create a cookbook, titled *Savoring the Shore* in celebration of the Jersey Shore. Featuring over one hundred and fifty recipes from notable New Jersey chefs and at-home cooks, the cookbook also consists of stories and photos in remembrance of what the shore once was. After months of collecting and tasting recipes, *Savoring the Shore* has hit the shelves one year after Hurricane Sandy.



"We saw the devastation happen to our neighbors up and down the shoreline, so we wanted to do something to help," said Kurelja. They began planning the cookbook last January heavily utilizing social media and word of mouth to publicize. A majority of their time was spent collecting recipes as well as perfecting the book's layout and design. "We've gotten a really positive response with the way it looks," said Kurelja. "People really like the reason for it."

When the concept of the cookbook surfaced, Larkin and Kurelja were surprised at the overwhelming amount of people who wanted to be a part of it. "The chef community was so cool and just wanted to help," said Kurelja. "They care so much about the community, most of them jumped at the chance to help." While their efforts are to assist all those affected by the ravaged storm, much of their focus has been on replacing school art supplies and other things that have not been treated as a priority. "There are a lot of places that weren't getting the media attention because they weren't considered essential, but they really are," said Kurelja. "We're really trying to focus on filling the gaps."

SAVORING THE SHORE

POINT PLEASANT, NJ

In between working full-time jobs, Larkin and Kurelja had been striving to get the book completed by the anniversary of Hurricane Sandy. "We certainly have been supportive with other relief efforts," said Kurelja, "but the majority of our focus has been on *Savoring the Shore*." When asked if a second edition of the cookbook is in the works, Kurelja was not opposed to the idea. "We have thought about it," said Kurelja. "We would love to be able to help other communities."

Outside of New Jersey, news of the cookbook has also spread to parts of Philadelphia. "As it spreads, other chefs want to engage stores that they go to," said Kurelja. Other areas dealing with similar devastations have been reaching out to Larkin and Kurelja for their help as well, including Colorado who recently suffered major flooding along Colorado's Front Range.

The organization of the cookbook including compiling recipes and reaching out to retailers was done by Larkin and Kurelja with the support of their friends and family. "We have very patient friends and family who has been our guinea pigs helping us taste all the recipes that were sent to us," said Kurelja. "There are some recipes that have become favorites of ours that we have made several times together."

Although the two enjoyed sampling the recipes, it was not their favorite part about creating the book. "My mom and I both really loved reading everyone's stories about what they love about the Jersey Shore," said Kurelja. "Some people did not want their stories published but they shared them with us and we really enjoyed them."

Many well-known chef's recipes are featured in the cookbook such as: top chef judge and New Jersey native Tom Colicchio; top chef master David Burke; five chefs from *Hell's Kitchen* Season 11 and Season 10, Barret Beyer, Jessica Lewis, Amanda Giblin, Jacqueline Baldassari, and Justin Antiorio; Louisa Shafia, author of the cookbook, *The New Persian Kitchen*.

SAVORING THE SHORE

POINT PLEASANT, NJ

Jersey Shore lovers will also recognize many restaurant favorites who submitted recipes including: Chef Marilyn Schlossbach owner of *Lan-gosta Lounge* in Asbury Park, New Jersey and other restaurants along the shoreline; Chef Mike Jurusz of *Chef Mike's Atlantic Bar and Grill* in Seaside Park, New Jersey; Chef Drew Araneo of *Drew's Bayshore Bistro* in Keyport, New Jersey; Chef Joe Introne of *Joe Leone's* of Point Pleasant Beach and Sea Girt, New Jersey; *Mueller's Bakery* in Bay Head, New Jersey; Linda M. Jensen, nutritionist for *Mary's Place by the Sea* in Ocean Grove, New Jersey; Karen L. Schnitzspahn, author of nine books about New Jersey including her most recent, *Jersey Shore Food History Victorian Feasts to Boardwalk Treats*.

Savoring the Shore can be purchased at any of the following retailers: *Lightly Salted* in Asbury Park, New Jersey; *Back to Nature Home and Garden* in Basking Ridge, New Jersey; *Gallery of Bliss* in Basking Ridge, New Jersey; *Life's Miracles Photography* in Bay Head, New Jersey; *Mueller's Bakery* in Bay Head, New Jersey; *The Bookworm* in Bernardsville, New Jersey; *Excel Fitness Center* in Bernardsville, New Jersey; *Pap-parazzi* in Bernardsville, New Jersey; *Pennsylvania Horticultural Society Pop Up Store* in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; *Haworth Apothecary* in Haworth, New Jersey; *Urban Cottage* in Peapack, New Jersey; *Borden's* in Point Pleasant Beach, New Jersey; *Joe Leone's* in Point Pleasant Beach, New Jersey; *Angler's Marina and Beach Boutique* in Sea Bright, New Jersey; *Vita Organic Foods* in Summit, New Jersey; *Tuckerton Seaport* in Tuckerton, New Jersey.

At a cost of \$24.99 each in hard copy, one hundred percent of the proceeds are donated to Larkin and Kurelja's non-profit organization, *Savoring Life, Inc.* The funds from the book will be dispersed through 501 (c)(3) non-profit organizations to make sure that they truly reach those in need. Visit their website for a full list of contributors and for a preview of the cookbook. Purchases can also be made on their website at <http://www.savoringtheshore.com>, Amazon.com and coming soon to ebooks like Kindle and other retail outlets.



Turn page for Basile's Italian Restaurant

Grandma's Kitchen...



BASILE'S ITALIAN RESTAURANT FREEHOLD, NJ

Good homemade southern Italian cuisine served fresh by the owners themselves, is hard to come by in this day and age. For a restaurant that has been around for two decades, that is the only way to go. Owners Bob and Alice Pesce opened *Basile's Italian Restaurant*, located in Freehold, New Jersey, in 1994 with childhood friends, Vito and Isabelle Basile. The family eatery was later completely taken over by Bob and Alice.

Bob, a former New York City firefighter and his wife Alice, an administrative assistant at a Wall Street law firm, never thought about owning a restaurant. As a teenager, Bob worked in a local butcher shop, while Alice had some experience waitressing. "We were very familiar with the business," said Bob. "Between her [Alice] knowing the front of the house and my experience with the back end, we took advantage of an opportunity. I happened to get really lucky, but I was never afraid of taking chances."

BASILE'S ITALIAN RESTAURANT

FREEHOLD, NJ

The restaurant's customer base is made up of primarily families, serving many of the same customers for years. "Our customers have grown with us," said Bob. "They know us and we know them." The couple also network with other local businesses such as *The Wine Room* in Manalapan, New Jersey by including links to the business on the restaurant's website. "It's all about connections," said Bob. Many of their recipes originated from their former co-owner's father and came straight from Italy. As time went on new recipes were developed through experimentation with new chefs and cookbooks.

Taking pride in their involvement, the couple says that it is their direct contact with the customers that makes *Basile's Italian Restaurant* stand out. "It's a place where your customers can feel like they're at their grandmother's house having dinner on a Sunday afternoon," said Bob. "It's an experience that takes them back to their childhood."

In addition to an ala carte lunch and dinner menu, *Basile's Italian Restaurant* extends space for various events such as seminars, civic organizations, birthdays, weddings, bridal showers, rehearsal dinners and more.

They also offer off-premise catering. The restaurant gives patrons a choice of an extensive New Jersey Wine list or bringing their own wine to accompany dinner. Open seven days a week starting at 11:00 am, Basile's features different specials every night.



For more information, visit their website at <http://www.basilesitalianrestaurant.com/> or call 732.866.4085.



Turn page for The Bar Room & Kitchen

The "Cheers" of the Jersey Shore...



THE BAR ROOM & KITCHEN DEAL, NJ

A friendly little bar where everybody knows your name was exactly what JJ Vacchiano envisioned when he opened *The Bar Room & Kitchen* in Deal, New Jersey last month. Taking the place of former bar *Otto's Bar & Grill*, the restaurant gives local residents a place to unwind after work with music, good food and drinks. The only thing missing from the neighboring eatery is Sam Malone serving beers while chatting with the customers but Vacchiano has already claimed that role.

Living at the Jersey Shore his whole life, Vacchiano was a bartender at the *Alenhurst Beach Club* before it was destroyed by Hurricane Sandy. He then decided to pursue his lifelong dream of owning his own bar. "I always wanted to do something small and intimate like this," said Vacchiano. "I wanted this area and being in Deal we can pull our customers from surrounding towns."

THE BAR ROOM & KITCHEN

DEAL, NJ

Before opening its doors, much of the restaurant was remodeled to get the look and feel that Vacchiano had in mind including the addition of a kitchen. "I drew a picture of how I wanted everything to look like and it turned out exactly like the picture," said Vacchiano. "It is kind of like the Cheers theme. No one is afraid to come here by themselves

Only being open for a short time, *The Bar Room & Kitchen* is already seeing a lot of customers from all over the area including college students. "I'm getting a lot of feedback and people from around the neighborhood are coming here," said Vacchiano. "Everyone is welcome and we have fun with it. I want everyone to be comfortable." Not only is the warm atmosphere attracting a crowd, but also the reasonable priced food and drink options are a plus. "I wanted to have happy hour prices all the time," said Vacchiano. "The only way to make that work was to have people in here all day so we extended hours. I've gotten critiqued for being too cheap in prices."

Along with their fresh and homemade menu selections, guests can also enjoy a variety of music playing on the jukebox throughout the day and watch the game from one of their several flat screen televisions. "I'm hoping to get the word out," said Vacchiano. "There's nothing like this

"It is kind of like the Cheers theme. No one is afraid to come here by themselves."

around here." Vacchiano was inspired by many Hoboken and Manhattan bars, incorporating different parts into the restaurant. "In 2014, there's too many options and there is no go-to place," said Vacchiano. "*The Bar Room & Kitchen* is a good neighborhood joint and I would not have been able to do it without my family and friends."

The Bar Room & Kitchen is located on Norwood Avenue in Deal, New Jersey. Open every day from 12:00pm until 12:00am, customers can choose from an extensive menu with frequent food and drink specials. Visit their website for more information <http://www.thebarroomandkitchen.com/#> or call 732.686.1295.



Turn page for The Cheese Cave

The Cheese Expert...



THE CHEESE CAVE RED BANK, NJ

In a world that has over 650 different kinds of cheeses to choose from, it is difficult to decide which to serve at the next dinner party. At *The Cheese Cave* located in Red Bank, New Jersey, owner Stephen Catania makes it easy for guests by providing them with knowledge and a broad variation of cheeses.

Former culinary master, Catania was in the hospitality business for thirty years before opening *The Cheese Cave* in February 2011. Living in and around Monmouth County most of his adult life, he settled in the historic little town of Red Bank because of its strong community. "I didn't want to just be in a strip mall off some local highway," said Catania. With about one hundred and fifty cheeses in store, the cheese shop offers a very diverse selection of styles focusing on American artisans. "A lot of people are intimidated by all the different cheeses, said Catania. What better to do than promote our own country."

THE CHEESE CAVE

RED BANK, NJ

The main goal of the shop is to help people understand and know more about cheese, distinguishing them from the deli in any grocery store. "At *The Cheese Cave*, our small staff is dedicated to knowing each and every product and being able to share a story of each of those products," said Catania. "Our products are hand-cut to order and the freshest possible, which makes the customer experience very different from the large store where many, if not all cheeses are pre-cut and wrapped for customer convenience." The shop also carries products imported as well as produced in the United States. "Customers are not apt to find these kinds of products in broad-based markets," said Catania.

In addition to selling cheeses, *The Cheese Cave* also offers classes and cheese samplings to get acquainted with the many kinds of cheeses.

"Every cheese has a story and we're here to tell it."

Each class is 90 minutes long featuring a structured presentation on the standard cheeses. There are also specific classes that focus on a specific country or style of cheese. "We try to create a casual and formal environment to broaden people's appreciation," said Catania. "Every cheese has a story and we're here to tell it." Guests are encouraged to bring their own bottle of wine during class time. About 10-15 spots are available for each class. Reservations are preferred. Guests may also take part in cheese samplings every Friday evening. For \$ 5.00 per person, guests can taste different kinds of cheeses each week in a social setting.

Inviting cheese-lovers of all ages, *The Cheese Cave* always welcomes new customers to the shop. "Whenever you come in there are always new faces," said Catania. "People from everywhere come into the shop." They also work very closely with neighbors by partnering with restaurants that have liquor licenses such as *The Wine Room* in Manalapan, New Jersey. They are also teaming up with Red Bank hotel, *The Molly Pitcher Inn* to hold a beer and cheese dinner on March 16th.

THE CHEESE CAVE

RED BANK, NJ

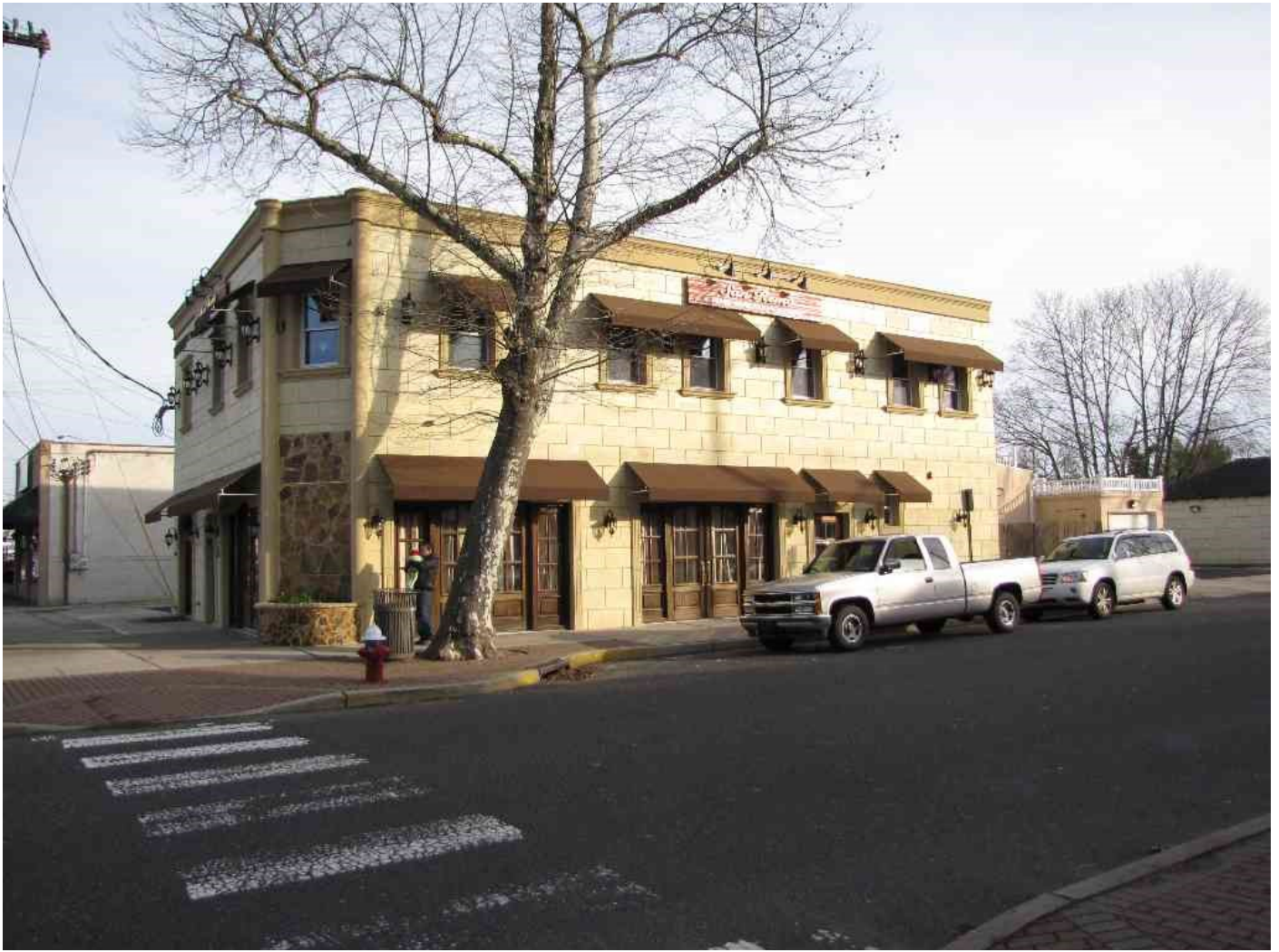
The Cheese Cave offers other items for purchase in store or online such as dried fruits and nuts, honey, jams, spices and more. *The Cheese Cave* specializes in customized platters that incorporate a variety of cheese selections, each appropriately signed with the name of cheese, country of origin and milk type along with dried fruits, nuts, preserves, chutneys and crackers. A wide selection of cured meats is also available to include on the platters. "Many times people come in and just ask us to make them a platter because they don't know what they want," said Catania.

The Cheese Cave is open Tuesday through Thursday 11:00 am until 6:00 pm and open until 9:00 pm on Fridays. On Saturdays their hours are from 10:00 am until 6:00 pm and Sundays from 12:00 pm until 4:00 pm. They are closed on Mondays. With daily blackboard sandwich specials, along with cheese and specialty food gift baskets, guests can also take advantage of their calendar of events featuring cheese and wine pairings, guides to creating your own cheeseboards, and live cooking demos. Seating has also been added enabling guests to come and enjoy any sandwiCHEESES, cheese plates, or charcuterie plate right in the shop. Visit their website for more information on classes and events at <http://www.cheesecaveshop.com/> or call 732.842.0796.



Turn page for San Remo

Old World Italian...



SAN REMO RED BANK, NJ

Proving that it is his special touch that has guests raving about the menu at *San Remo* in Red Bank, New Jersey, owner and chef, Giovanni A. Boudour never disappoints. Serving Northern and Southern Italian Cuisine, Boudour has been wowing customers with his cooking since he arrived to the United States from Bergamo, Italy in 1992. Since then, he has worked in kitchens throughout New York and New Jersey incorporating delicious Italian dishes with warm, elegant dining.

Before opening *San Remo* (named after a city located in north-western Italy), Boudour worked in several fine dining establishments in Manhattan. He opened up the first *San Remo* restaurant, in Shrewsbury, New Jersey in 1993 where he remained for 17 years. Looking for a larger space and to own his own building, Boudour moved the Jersey Shore favorite to Red Bank, New Jersey, where his dedicated customers continue to flock.

SAN REMO

RED BANK, NJ

"It was my dream all the time to have my own fine dining restaurant and show my talent," said Boudour. "People feel good about the new place. It was my gift to all my customers."

Bringing only the freshest, homemade ingredients to the table, the Moroccan native's love for traveling inspired many of his recipes. "My recipes come with my knowledge and experience," said Boudour. "My kitchen is always a creative kitchen with all new dishes. Each year I visit a different country and I like to try different food from everywhere." The chef also admitted that the restaurant industry is a very competitive business, especially with all the competition in the area. "There is very serious competition. You have to know what you are doing or you will be out," said Boudour. "My recipes, my cuisine, there is my touch. We all make Pasta Pomodoro like many restaurants, but who makes the good one; the one who is the most patient."

Described by Boudour as "elegant dining in a casual place," *San Remo* has the perfect small town feel including an outdoor patio and the option to bring your own beer and wine. "Small towns are better," said

"It was my dream all the time to have my own fine dining restaurant and show my talent,"

Boudour. "In Manhattan it's a lot of energy and most people live there so you are working really late. In a small town by ten o'clock you close up and you're done." This is a benefit for the staff who have time to relax and recuperate after their shifts. "We are only open for dinner. When you get tired you start making mistakes. Changing the help all the time doesn't help any business to grow."



"My recipes, my cuisine, there is my touch. We all make Pasta Pomodoro like many restaurants, but who makes the good one; the one who is the most patient."

SAN REMO

RED BANK, NJ

The relocation of *San Remo* allowed for more dining space accommodating about 66 patrons in the main dining room, and additional 30 seats on the outdoor patio. The upstairs is reserved for catering and private parties which can accommodate up to 64 guests. "When I opened *San Remo* in Red Bank I decided that was it," said Boudour. "It needed a lot of work and I'm getting older. When it's packed, everyone needs help even the dishwasher."



San Remo has received positive reviews from the Asbury Park Press, New York Times and Chef Boudour has been featured on News 12 New Jersey for his talent. Located on the west side next to the New Jersey Transit commuter train station, they are open every evening from 4:00 pm to 11:00 pm. A private room for catering is available for any occasion. Visit their website for more information and to view their full menu <http://www.sanremoitaliana.com/index.php>.



Turn page for Monticello Restaurant

The Chef's Choice...



MONTICELLO RESTAURANT RED BANK, NJ

There has been nothing but good reviews from restaurant-goers who have dined at *Monticello Restaurant* in Red Bank, New Jersey, giving executive chef, Katerina Giambalvo two thumbs up! The Venezuelan born cook gives customers a pleasurable dining experience with her homemade Italian Fusion, including a Mediterranean twist. Strolling in on the way to or coming from an evening at the Count Basie Theatre or after an afternoon at Navesink Water Front Park, guests flock to the 86 seat restaurant with hearty appetites and expectations.

After arriving in the United States in 1999, Giambalvo studied culinary arts at the *Culinary Institute of New York* before she opened *Monticello Bistro* in South Amboy, New Jersey in 2004. As head chef for five years, Giambalvo began to experiment with ethnic dishes she learned from traveling coupled with those she grew up with from her parent's Italian background. "I like to create and design visually and utilize my five senses when I'm cooking," said Giambalvo.

MONTICELLO RESTAURANT

RED BANK, NJ

Bringing her talents to Red Bank, the artist later moved the restaurant's location in 2009 to the popular downtown dining area calling it a 'destination town.' "South Amboy was not a restaurant town," said Giambalvo. "When we moved to Red Bank we knew that the amount of walk-ins would be higher, increasing business." Formerly managed with her brother Roberto before taking sole ownership, the renamed *Monticello Restaurant* features dishes reflecting Italian, French, Spanish and European styles. "About ninety percent of the recipes are my creations," said Giambalvo. "The other ten percent are the traditional Italian meals that people love to eat."

Giambalvo introduces her guests to Northern and Southern Italian cuisine through her unique specials. "My specials are out of the ordinary," said Giambalvo. "I try to think of something new and exciting and what I want people to experience for the first time." Dishes are seasonally rotated in and out of the menu to incorporate new recipes. "I would say eighty percent of our customers are regulars and they usually bring fresh faces with them," said Giambalvo.

The restaurant is also available for parties or meetings accommodating 86 guests in the dining room and an additional 12 on the outside patio. "It's not elegant or fine dining, but it's not a pizzeria either," said Giambalvo. The eatery offers BYOB dining and off-premise catering as well. A jazz band performs on the patio twice a year. "In Red Bank we are unique and authentic offering Italian cuisine in contrast to everyone out there who offers American Italian cuisine," said Giambalvo. "We are the pioneer in Red Bank serving authentic Italian cuisine."

Monticello Restaurant is open Tuesday through Saturday from 3:30 pm to 10:00 pm and on Sunday from 3:30 pm to 9:00 pm. They are closed on Mondays. The restaurant offers private party packages, special promotions and a separate catering menu including a gluten free menu upon request. Visit their website to make a reservation <http://www.monticelloatredbank.com/index.html> or call 732.450.0255.



Turn page for Shipwreck Point

Seaside Steakhouse...



SHIPWRECK POINT POINT PLEASANT BEACH, NJ

Customers do not have to think twice about ordering a bottle of wine with their meal at *Shipwreck Point*, because that's what everyone does! *Shipwreck Point* (no affiliation with Brielle restaurant, *Shipwreck Grill*), is an upscale steakhouse located on the Manasquan Inlet in Point Pleasant Beach. Every element of *Shipwreck Point* is designed to impress, with beautiful views of the Manasquan Inlet and ambience of finely crafted materials, intimate lighting and warm fireplaces. The restaurant features a premium steak and seafood menu coupled with an extensive wine selection, all adding up to a first-class experience that keeps guests coming back.

Wine prices at the restaurant range from \$50 to as high as \$925 a bottle. "Most customers are ordering bottles for \$200 with their dinner", said General Manager Robert Pascual. "All of our meals are freshly prepared and elegantly presented. Our seafood is the freshest," continues Pascual.

SHIPWRECK POINT

POINT PLEASANT BEACH, NJ

"Knowing that we have genuine fresh seafood from local fishermen is what we take pride in. The customers choose what they want and we supply it. We try to keep the menu customary that way."

Shipwreck Point has been a crowd-pleaser, receiving several awards including the NJ Monthly Readers Award for Best New Restaurant, Best Wine List and Best Steak as well as winner of Metromix Jersey Shore Best of Award for Best New Restaurant. "There isn't much competition if you're looking for a high-end restaurant, this is it. The eatery's impeccable service has much to do with our recognition. We don't just hire kids; our servers are trained and are all on point," said Pascual.

Guests are encouraged to take advantage of their off-premise catering and private party space. Free valet parking is also available on the weekends for convenience and will be extended during the summer months.

Shipwreck Point opens Tuesday through Saturday at 5:00 pm and closes at 9:00 pm; Open later on weekends. Hours are 4:00 pm to 9:00 pm on Sundays. They will be open all day on Mother's Day. Wine and beer pairings will be offered soon upon reservation. Visit their website to download their complete menu <http://shipwreckpointsteakhouse.com/>.



Turn page for The River Watch

The Dock and Dine...

THE RIVER WATCH BRICK, NJ

Boat owners may just have the best seat in the house at this Jersey Shore restaurant. *The River Watch Restaurant* located in Brick, New Jersey invites customers for casual dining inside or outside via service right to their boat.

Dreaming of one day having their own restaurant overlooking the water, owners Matt Pellicano and Robb "The Captain" Councilor fell in love with the waterfront location formerly known as the Pilot House. "We searched for at least a year to find the perfect location," said Pellicano. "We went on a trip to Florida and got inspired and wanted to be on a marina." Pellicano has been in the restaurant business for years as the original owner of several well-known restaurants such as *Arthur's Steakhouse* in Westwood, New Jersey, *Coco Pozzo* in Saddle Brook, New Jersey and *Sherries* in Freehold, New Jersey.



The River Watch Restaurant has become a prime spot for many local residents serving the freshest food on the market. "We don't own a microwave because none of our food is frozen," said Pellicano. "Our customers have to have patience when they come here because everything is made to order." Specializing in steak and seafood, *The River Watch* also serves a variety of pasta, sandwiches and burgers. "We wanted to be an original restaurant that has nothing to do with what chain restaurants do," said Pellicano. "We are reasonably priced and we do not want to be known as a place people only go to for special occasions."

One of the big perks of being so close to the *Forge Landing Marina*, is boaters can get service right from their boats. "We help customers dock their boats and we can serve them right on their boat," said Pellicano.

THE RIVER WATCH

BRICK, NJ

"We are not a seasonal place but in the summertime we have a lot of dock and diners." Restaurant-goers can enjoy specials every day, live entertainment on the weekends and holiday events. "We wanted a casual, happy atmosphere," said Pellicano. "We didn't want a stuffed-shirt place."

Specials that are offered include Lobster Night, Ladies Night, Prime Rib Night, and Sunday Brunch excluding holidays. "We are really open to families and want everyone to come," continues Pellicano. "There's always something going on." Coming soon will be a Trivia Night and a Disco Night on Thursdays where guests can dance and enjoy themselves. "I would love to open another restaurant in Florida within the next couple of years," states Pellicano.

The River Watch Restaurant & Lounge is open seven days a week beginning June 1, 2014 from 11:30 am to 12:00 am on weekdays, closing at 2:00 am on weekends. On Sundays their hours are from 10:30 am to 12:00 am. They are closed on Mondays during the winter months. Visit their website to view their entertainment schedule and to download their full menu at <http://www.riverwatchbricknj.com/#!home/mainPage> or call (732) 920-8900 to book a reservation today!



Made-to-Order Pub...

TIPPERARY PUB LAKEHURST, NJ

Four guys walk into a bar and the rest is history. *Tipperary Pub* located in Lakehurst, New Jersey became the go-to restaurant and bar for local residents since opening two years ago, until Super Storm Sandy put a hurting on business in the entire area. That's the old *Tipperary Pub* story. Now under new ownership, the fully remodeled restaurant is preparing for a grand opening.

New owner and experienced businessman, Emil Hartel is determined to get the popular eatery back on its feet by introducing new specials, live entertainment, and lower drink prices. "The original owners did a nice job but they didn't have the experience to keep it afloat like I do," said Hartel. Former owner of Pavo Pizza in Toms River, New Jersey, German restaurateur, Hartel has been managing food and liquor businesses for over forty years including pizzerias, nightclubs and restaurants.



TIPPERARY PUB

LAKEHURST, NJ

The restaurant is designed with a large rectangular bar and a separate party room to accommodate fifty guests. "I am in the process of redecorating to give it a more Zen feeling," said Hartel. "Right now it is very nice but the atmosphere is cold and I'm trying to make it feel homier." Also in the works are tasty additions to the menu of what Hartel calls, "New American Cuisine." "We are going to add pasta, pizza and salad. What people like to eat," said Hartel. A coal-fire pizza oven will also be installed soon.

Hartel's main priority is to appeal to the surrounding community. Delivery will be offered for the older people living in the area and the cus-

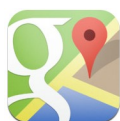
"We have to let people know there is a new owner and we are better than ever!"



tomers from Lakehurst's military facility, *Joint Base McGuire Dix*, will enjoy the many international dishes featured on the new menu. "Everything will be made to order," said Hartel. "There's going to be something for everyone!" Entertainment

will also be added, featuring live bands on the weekends. "It is going to take time to establish ourselves," said Hartel. "We have to let people know there is a new owner and we are better than ever!"

The Tipperary Pub is located at 2313 Highway 547, Lakehurst, New Jersey. For more information or to make a reservation, visit <http://tipperarypub.com/> or call 732.323.0007.



Turn page for Michael Angelo's

Italian Market & Pizza...

MICHAEL ANGELO'S MONMOUTH BEACH, NJ

After 17 years in business and three Jersey Shore locations, it is usually a no-brainer for local residents in choosing *Michael Angelo's* as their favorite pizza shop. Frequent guests will now see a new face in the Monmouth Beach, New Jersey location as longtime business owner and chef, Massimo DiMeo took over the popular restaurant.

Since arriving in the United States in 1978 from Monte di Procida, Italy, DiMeo has always had a passion for the food industry. He got a feel for the business working in his uncle's restaurant when he was young, later opening several eateries in the Jersey Shore area. He currently owns a well-known restaurant *Antonio's Trattoria* in Wall Township, New Jersey, which his son manages. DiMeo's wife helps oversee the business at *Michael Angelo's* as well.



With some new additions to the menu and friendly service, DiMeo promises a better dining experience. "It's not the food that is the problem," said DiMeo. "Ninety-nine percent of our complaints are from the service." Former owner of the restaurant location is Angelo DiCapua who still runs the other locations including Long Branch, New Jersey and Sea Girt, New Jersey. He also is co-owner of *MJ's Restaurant* in Matawan, New Jersey. "Angelo had a lot of places to take care of," said DiMeo. "I'm here every day so I try to do my best on the service. That's how you run a business: good food, good service."

Regulars of the pizzeria do not have to worry about their favorite food place changing too drastically, for DiMeo plans on keeping much of the menu the same with some gradual additions. "I'm concentrating on giving good service and learning the system and then I'll consider the necessary changes," said DiMeo. "I will change a little bit at a time. I'm not going to change the whole menu at once."

MICHAEL ANGELO'S

MONMOUTH BEACH, NJ



The restaurant still remains bring your own alcohol with the convenience of the liquor store right next door, but other adjustments will be made. "It's not going to happen overnight," said DiMeo. "But in 2-3 months it will be much different."

DiMeo is confident in making a positive fresh start in the business, not

That's how you run a business: good food, good service."

letting past reviews interfere with the shop's progress. "Each owner makes their own reputation," said DiMeo. "I've been in the food business for almost forty years. I believe experience makes a difference. I invested money to make money, not to lose it so I am confident in doing just that."

Michael Angelo's is open from 11:00 am – 10:00 pm on weekdays and close at 11:00 pm on weekends and has both indoor and outdoor seating. Take-out, delivery and catering are also available. For more information or to place an order, call 732.229.2500.



Turn page for Forte Restaurant

The Friendly Neighborhood Eatery...

FORTE RESTAURANT POINT PLEASANT BEACH, NJ

Immediately being greeted by the owner with a handshake and a smile is what customers experience when dining at Mediterranean eatery, the *Forte Restaurant*. Located on Bridge Avenue in Point Pleasant, New Jersey, the fourteen year old business is known as the *Cheers* of the Jersey Shore town with friendly service and frequent customers.



A veteran chef from Turkey, owner John Ucal's career began as a cruise ship chef constantly traveling at sea and once in the States, as the manager of a Jersey Shore establishment seeing familiar faces every day. "Most of our business is repetitive," said Ucal. "Most customers say 'let's go see John' and they don't even mention the *Forte Restaurant*."

The local hotspot was opened in 1995 by John and his partner and chef, Marco Vinas. Both gentlemen previously had worked together at another restaurant. Together they have created a warm and inviting eatery making interacting with the customers a ***For most restaurants it's the chef that makes the restaurant, but here it's the staff that makes the restaurant.***

main priority. "It's a European way to run a restaurant," said Ucal. For most restaurants it's the chef that makes the restaurant, but here it's the staff that makes the restaurant."

The first floor of the restaurant is where the bar is located and a small area for dining. The second floor dining room handles ala carte overflow but is primarily used for banquets and entertainment.. Entertainment includes live music, dinner shows, belly dancing and more; all with a European flavor.

Continued on next page

FORTE RESTAURANT

POINT PLEASANT BEACH, NJ

Thursdays feature 'Bring Your Own Wine' nights where guests are invited to bring their favorite wine to dine, making them feel comfortable and like they are at home. "The people who come here really care about the place," said Ucal. "They belong to the Forte Restaurant and when they come here they feel at home. Anywhere else they would just eat and leave but it's not like that here."

The Forte Restaurant is also winner of multiple Asbury Park's "Best of the Best" awards recognized for their dining, happy hour menu, and banquet facilities. "We have very loyal customers," said Ucal. "So many restaurants in the area have come and gone but we've stayed strong because of our customers."

Forte Restaurant is open Monday through Friday for lunch and dinner from 11:00 am to 11:00 pm and weekends from 3:00 pm to 11:00 pm. Banquet facilities accommodate up to ninety guests. Take-out is also available. To plan an event or make a reservation, visit their website at <http://www.forteuniquecuisines.com/index.html> or call 732.899.5600.



Turn page for Indulge Lounge

Pier Village Lounge...



INDULGE LOUNGE LONG BRANCH, NJ

Slip on a pair of high heels and gather the girls to join the crowd at *Indulge Lounge & Food Bar* in Long Branch, New Jersey. The boardwalk restaurant is conveniently located in Pier Village with direct access to the beach, dining and shopping. Unwind during their casual happy hour or forget about the workday during their late night hours at one of the Jersey Shore's best summertime lounges.

Open all year round, guests can enjoy the extensive drink menu including creative martinis, cocktails, and wines as well as an array of food and snack options. Operating owner, Joseph Squillaro encourages guests to come for dinner and stay all night long. "In the beginning people thought this was just a lounge that they could come and get drinks at, but now people know that they can have dinner here too," said Squillaro. Proving to be most popular during the summer months, the bar is busiest on the weekends.

INDULGE LOUNGE

LONG BRANCH, NJ

"As long as the weather is good, our business is good," said Squillaro. "When the weather is bad, our business slows down a bit."

Since opening its doors in September of 2012, *Indulge Lounge & Food Bar* has maintained an image of being a fun and sophisticated place to relax and enjoy a late night drink with friends. This includes a dress code that is heavily enforced on the weekends. "We try to stay trendy," said Squillaro. "If someone comes in wearing a backwards baseball hat, we will ask him to leave it in the car." During quieter business hours, guests are free to dress comfortable and casual. "If we're really busy we try to stick to the dress code," said Squillaro. "During the week people come in wearing bathing suits and flip flops and we never kick them out."

Indulge's daily happy hour and weekly events attract a big crowd as well. Guests can stop by for happy hour Mondays through Thursdays from 3:30 pm to 8:00 pm; Fridays and Saturdays from 3:00 pm to 8:00 pm; Sundays from 12:00 pm to close. Happy hour prices continue all night on Thursdays on select menu items. On Wednesday nights experience live acoustic in the lounge from 8:00 pm to 11:00 pm.

Kick off the weekend on Friday night with Fridays After Dark featuring DJ Steve Sapz from 9:00 pm until closing and Saturday DJ Manuel brings the dance party! The fun continues on Sunday with all day happy hour and Industry Night from 9:00 pm to closing, offering half price off everything for anyone who works for tips and shows their employee ID. "In this industry, everyone's Friday night is Sunday," said Squillaro. "Sundays are better than Fridays a lot of times."

Indulge Lounge & Food Bar is open from 3:30 pm to 1:30 am Sunday through Wednesday. Thursday through Saturday closing is at 2:00 am. Doors open at 12:00 pm on weekends. Party space is also available with at least one week notice. The lounge can accommodate up to 75 people. The restaurant is available for rent for parties of 100 guests or more. To book an event or special occasion, view their website <http://www.indulgeloungenj.com/> or call 732.963.9352.



Turn page for The Sitting Duck

Perfect Family Dining...

THE SITTING DUCK LONG BRANCH, NJ

The Jersey Shore offers more than just fresh seafood and boardwalk snacks. For 20 years, guests have flocked to *The Sitting Duck*, for their delicious menu, which of course includes duck! Located in Long Branch, New Jersey, loyal customers make weekly visits to the restaurant along with sister restaurant, The Pour House in Tinton Falls, New Jersey.

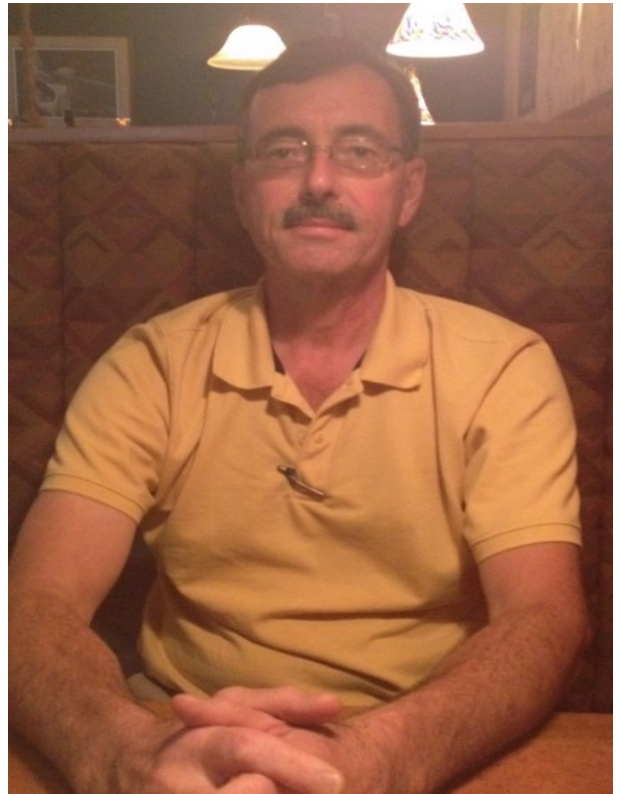
After purchasing *The Sitting Duck* in 1984, owner Gary Shoelkopf and his partner and brother Michael Shoelkopf have made it their mission to make the restaurant a success. Using experience they gained helping their parents who owned a restaurant when the Shoelkopf boys were growing up, they have received a lot of positive feedback from restaurant-goers. "*The Sitting Duck* is like the *Cheers* of Long Branch," said Gary Shoelkopf.

"Ninety-eight percent of our business is recurring customers. We are not located on a main road so if you are coming here, you are coming here to eat."

Both establishments serve the same food but to a very different crowd. the Sitting Duck generally welcomes families and middle aged guests, while the Pour House draws a younger crowd. "Items don't sell the same. The age group and socioeconomic status is different," said Shoelkopf. "Family dining is what we promote. Mom

"People don't come here to dine, they come here to eat"

and Dad with two kids, that's our customer at *The Sitting Duck*." Although entertainment is not offered, guests can enjoy the open kitchen setup at The Sitting Duck where they can watch their food being made. "Parents like our open kitchen because their kids can watch the cooking going on and they aren't on their phones the whole time."



THE SITTING DUCK

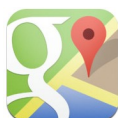
LONG BRANCH, NJ

With dozens of compliments on their good food and friendly service on social media, Shoelkopf stresses that the most important thing is the price. "People don't come here to dine, they come here to eat," said Shoelkopf. "Someone with a wife and kids doesn't want to spend a ton of money someplace else, so we keep our prices fairly reasonable." Interacting with the customers is also important to keep guests happy. "At a chain restaurant there is no one to reach out and touch," said Shoelkopf. "People like seeing the owner and familiar faces."



The Sitting Duck also hosts car shows every Tuesday night where participants showcase their cars to receive a \$10 restaurant gift card. From September 15th through the month of October, guests can choose from an array of German food to celebrate Oktoberfest. Guests can also indulge in their daily super specials.

The Sitting Duck is open Sunday and Monday from 11:00 am to 11:00 pm and Tuesday through Saturday from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm. Hours at The Pour House are Monday through Saturday 11:30 am to 2:00 am; close at 12:00 am on Sundays. The restaurant is closed for all major holidays. Private party space is available. Visit their websites to sign up for their birthday club and to receive a complimentary gift card at <http://www.sittingduckrestaurant.com/> and <http://www.pourhouserestaurant.com/>.



Turn page for Solo Trattoria

Roman Appeal...

SOLO TRATTORIA FREEHOLD, NJ

Born and raised in Rome, Italy, Piergiorgio Ceciarelli knows a thing or two about Italian cooking. Ceciarelli broadcasts his passion for food with the success of his restaurants *Solo Trattoria* located in Freehold, New Jersey and *Coal Fired Pizza Restaurant* located in Manalapan, New Jersey. Guests can explore international dishes inspired from all parts of Italy without ever having to leave the Jersey Shore!



Using his experience working in the food industry at a young age, the chef decided to go into the business. After open and operating a restaurant in Florida, Ceciarelli opened *Solo Trattoria* in 2005 in New Jersey to be closer to family. "Being Italian, we all have food in our blood," said Ceciarelli. "We love it here in New Jersey, being able to work with the local farms to get fresh ingredients." Ceciarelli expressed his love for the small Jersey Shore town, which emulates his hometown. "The borough of Freehold gives me that European feeling of a small town instead of being in a strip mall on a highway," said Ceciarelli. "It feels like a community."

Growing up in central Italy, Ceciarelli introduces his customers to recipes from both Northern and Southern parts of the country. "When we came over here we brought a lot of dishes that were not seen anywhere before," said Ceciarelli. "We are behind our product 110 percent, and serve everything homemade." Ceciarelli is also proud to serve many restaurateurs that come to dine often. "It makes me happy because they are people from the industry that really appreciate fine cooking," boasts Ceciarelli.

Coal Fired Pizza Restaurant located in Manalapan, New Jersey is also very popular serving pizza out of a coal oven.

SOLO TRATTORIA

FREEHOLD, NJ

"We wanted to make the best pizza in the area," Ceciarelli explained. It's not about being the best pizza in the world, but creating the best product for the area." The three year old business welcomes everyone but mainly encourages family dining. "We have had a lot of customers that have been coming to us for years and I have watched their families grow," said Ceciarelli. "It's fun to watch the kids evolve and have their own families."



A third business that has taken off with the Ceciarelli name is his wife Antoinette's cupcake business. *Bake Cupcakery* operates out of the *Coal Fired Pizza Restaurant* selling homemade cakes and cupcakes for any party or event. The tasty treats are also featured at *Solo Restaurant*. Contact Antoinette by phone at 732.439.4015, view her website <http://www.bakecupcakery.com> or visit her Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Bake-Cupcakery/143377942347379>. Consulting is by appointment only.

Solo Trattoria is open from Monday through Thursday 11:00 am to 10:00 pm and Fridays until 11:00 pm. Saturday hours are from 12:00 pm to 11:00 pm and Sundays closing is at 9:00 pm. To make a reservation or view the menu, visit <http://www.solotrattoria.com>, "like" their Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/SoloTrattoria> or call 732.780.2337. Wine tastings are also offered by invitation only from their email list. *Coal Fired Pizza Restaurant* operates from 11:00 am to 10:00 pm Monday through Thursday; open until 12:00 pm on Saturdays and close at 9:00 pm on Sundays. For more information, view their website <http://www.coalpizzeria.com>, Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/CoalFiredPizza>, or call 732.677.3220. Both restaurants offer in-house and off-premise catering. They are closed for all major religious holidays.



Turn page for Windward Tavern

Neighborhood Center...

WINDWARD TAVERN

From manager to chef to dishwasher, Mort Nase, owner of *Windward Tavern* in Brick, New Jersey, isn't afraid to get his hands dirty. Working in the restaurant industry for over 30 years, Nase knows how to keep customers entertained with live bands, daily specials, promoting sporting events and more.

Since opening in June 2012, the eatery has undergone a full renovation making it a comfortable hang out for guests. Changes include a raised ceiling, added windows, enlarged bathrooms, and remodeled bar and dining area. Also, updated was the menu emulating an American Pub with cheaper prices. "I always liked this location and the restaurant," said Nase. "It has been a rough couple of years but we've seen some tremendous growth."



No stranger to the business, Nase has been very hands-on in every aspect of the industry throughout his career. Starting off as a kitchen manager, he also has experience as a bartender, kitchen manager and general manager. "There is nothing in the business that I haven't done," said Nase who admitted that he recently helped wash dishes while short staffed. "I do whatever it takes."

Many of the customers at the *Windward Tavern* are fans who come to watch sporting events on the 11 flat screen televisions surrounding the bar. During half-time there is a free hot and cold buffet along with beer and drink specials for guests to enjoy. Daily specials are offered on weekdays as well. On select Sundays the Windward Tavern teams up with mobile entertainment company, Games2U. From 10:00 am to 1:00 pm, kids can play video games from the gaming truck while parents can feast on an all-you-can-eat breakfast buffet. "In this town you have to compete with the chain restaurants," said Nase. "They can afford to do 2 for 1 specials, but I have to come up with other ways to draw business."

WINDWARD TAVERN

BRICK, NJ

Guests who dine at the tavern on the weekends can also enjoy live entertainment. "We started booking small bands and people really seem to like it," said Nase. "If people are hanging out at the bar, once the band comes they will stick around longer to listen to them."

A big part of the restaurant's success was their resources when Hurricane Sandy swept through the area in August 2012. "During Hurricane Sandy we were the only bar open in the area because we had a diesel generator," said Nase. "You couldn't move in this place because there was nowhere else for anyone to go. We were definitely discovered after that." In an effort to help, the restaurant donated meals to locals who were affected by the storm as well as first responders.

Often giving a hand to the community, the restaurant staff is also involved in a cancer walk supporting a group of women who are breast cancer survivors. On Sunday, October 19th, ten percent of proceeds made at the restaurant will be donated towards the team. They also participate in local school fundraisers.

Windward Tavern is open Monday through Saturday from 11:30 am to 2:00 am. On Sundays they open at 10:00 am. Service includes off-premise catering and take-out. Private party space is available on Sundays from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm in the dining room. To view their food and drink menu or plan an event, visit their website at <http://www.windwardtavern.com/Home.php> or call 732.892.9463.



Turn page for Brennen's Steakhouse

The Air Force Veteran...

BRENNEN'S STEAKHOUSE NEPTUNE, NJ

An unobtrusive venue with a friendly staff and a mouthwatering menu best describes *Brennen's Steakhouse* located in Neptune, New Jersey. Since opening in 2003, the restaurant, owned by Air Force veteran Kevin Fitzsimmons and his wife Maura, has been an area favorite.

Both natives of the Jersey Shore town and previous owners of former 10-year-old Neptune eatery, *La Cantina*, the couple are no strangers to the area. "My husband always wanted to own a steakhouse," says Maura Fitzsimmons. "My kids grew up here and we lived here all of our lives, so we thought this location would be a good fit."

The steakhouse, which was named after their son Brennen, is known for its laid back atmosphere and familiar faces. "We are a very family oriented business," said Fitzsimmons. "My staff has been with us since day one. When people start working with us they are here for a while." In every aspect of the restaurant the employees are very hands-on with all responsibilities. "We are not afraid to get our hands dirty," said Fitzsimmons. "If I need to I will go in the back and wash dishes. Everyone helps everyone out."

The restaurateurs' take pride in their menu including freshly cut steaks, homemade dressings and daily specials. "The key to our business is everything is not all a la carte," said Fitzsimmons. "People are very happy when they find out that our salads and sides are included with the meal. Most steak houses you don't get everything for one cost." The restaurant also offers Early Bird Specials from Monday through Friday from 4:00 pm to 5:45 pm and all day Sunday. "We started doing the early bird specials because we found there was a lull in business between lunch and dinner," said Fitzsimmons. "The addition has attracted people greatly."



BRENNEN'S STEAKHOUSE

NEPTUNE, NJ

A big treat for customers is the entertainment provided every Wednesday through Sunday. Patrons can delight in the musical sounds of Al Rando, an 89-year-old blind pianist who has been performing at the restaurant for 11 years. "He's been playing at other venues in the area for years," boasted Fitzsimmons. "People come to see Al; he's amazing!"

Restaurant goers also visit the steakhouse to admire the plaques and military memorabilia showcased throughout the eatery. "My husband was in the Air Force for 27 years," said Fitzsimmons. "If he could still be a part of the Air Force he would be." The restaurant often donates to local picnics and senior events as well.

Brennen's Steakhouse is open from 11:00 am to 11:00 pm for lunch and dinner. Daily specials are available as well. Go to their Facebook page to view their menu at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Brennens-Steak-House/118526904825097>. Also visit sister restaurant, Patrick's Pub located in Neptune City, New Jersey. Managed by their son, Patrick, the restaurant and bar is open every day from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm appealing to a young, crowd. For more information, visit their Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Patricks-Pub/575282422558950>.



Turn page for Salt Creek Grille

The Waterfront Venue...

SALT CREEK GRILLE RUMSON, NJ

The holidays are quickly approaching and guests are eager to reserve a room for their holiday parties at the *Salt Creek Grille*. With locations in California and New Jersey, the restaurant and bar specializes in special events as well as offering an exquisite fine dining experience. Regional Operations Partner of the *Salt Creek Grille*, Steve Bidgood describes what to expect when visiting the restaurant.

As co-owner of parent company, *Benchmark Enterprises, Inc.*, Bidgood is very familiar with the restaurant industry. The eatery became the second restaurant in the company after opening in 1998, following the Dana Point, California location. "Our concept is very unique and not many people do it," said Bidgood. "We opened with a bang because people wanted to know about us." Other locations include: El Segundo, California; Valencia, California; and Princeton, New Jersey.



Although each restaurant appeals to a different crowd, Bidgood promises a consistent menu and friendly staff. "Rumson is very suburbia so we are open for parties and dinner. In Princeton, the restaurant is surrounded by businesses so we are open for lunch and hold a lot of corporate events," said Bidgood. "You have to look at each location to decide how to cater to your guests." Their impressive menu attracts guests as well, featuring the finest homemade dishes. "All the restaurants do very well," said Bidgood. "We're having a great year!"

Selecting the staff is also something that Bidgood takes very seriously believing that a hard work ethic and a smile go a long way. "I try to hire people that like to be around people," said Bidgood. "I can train people to bartend and wait tables but I can't teach them how to smile. If you don't like people you better not be in the restaurant industry."

SALT CREEK GRILLE

RUMSON, NJ



Along with managing six businesses, Bidgood also spends much of his time attending events and fundraisers. "We are very community minded," said Bidgood. "We do very little advertising because we attend a lot of events and get the word out about *Salt Creek Grille* that way." Much of the company's focus in the upcoming year will be in supporting the non-profit organization, Kortney Rose Foundation.

Known for their lavish facilities, the *Salt Creek Grille's* private banquet hall accommodates up to 150 guests. Also available are catering, valet parking, professional event coordination, custom menu planning, and handicap accessibility. Party-goers may have access to the outdoor area overlooking the water for events such as weddings, receptions, bridal and baby showers, anniversary parties, corporate dinners and more. Guests are also invited to visit the restaurant during the month of December for a spectacular Christmas lights display.

Salt Creek Grille, located at 20 Bingham Avenue in Rumson, New Jersey is open for dinner and drinks. Doors open at 4:00 pm and close at 10:00 pm seven days a week. Brunch is available on Sundays from 10:30 am until 2:00 pm. Daily drink specials include: half price wine bottles on Mondays; half price draft beer on Tuesdays; half price wine by the glass on Wednesdays; and half price martinis on Thursdays. Happy Hour is from 4:00 pm to 6:30 pm Monday through Friday. To make a reservation or purchase tickets for an upcoming event, visit their website at <http://www.saltcreekgrille.com/home/index.asp> or call 732.933.9272.



Turn page for La Dolce Vita

The Sweet Life...

LA DOLCE VITA BELMAR, NJ

Visit *La Dolce Vita* in Belmar, New Jersey for authentic Italian cooking served by Sicilian born Guiseppe Salpietro and his nephew Nicola Fuccilli. Perched in a quiet area overlooking the ocean, the duo utilized their experience in the restaurant industry to create the English translation "The Sweet Life."

Before becoming business partners, Fuccilli grew up working for his uncle as a bus boy in his restaurant. Passing down the torch, Fuccilli opened a pizza parlor in Belmar, New Jersey in 1999 while Salpietro ran his restaurant in Brick, New Jersey. In June 2006, Fuccilli recruited recently retired Salpietro and they opened *La Dolce Vita*. "We tried to make the restaurant more of a destination place," said Fuccilli. "The area used to be dead after 5:00 pm so we wanted to bring life in the area."



Guests can enjoy a fine dining experience at *La Dolce Vita*, or visit their newest addition, *La Terrazza* located next door. "In the summertime we wanted to make something more casual," said Fuccilli. *La Terrazza* offers an outdoor bar area during the summer months for beach goers as well as indoor seating serving pizza and other Italian dishes. "We are all one corporation with two separate brands," said Fuccilli.

With a combined 40 years of experience between Fuccilli and Salpietro, both bring different qualities to the table. "I definitely learned the fine dining aspect from my uncle," said Fuccilli. "We are both very hands-on with all aspects of the restaurant." Fuccilli is also a frequent traveler and he incorporates much of what he sees into the restaurant. "I love to travel so when I see things that I like, I bring it back to the restaurant," said Fuccilli.

LA DOLCE VITA

BELMAR, NJ

Unlike some other restaurants along the oceanfront, many of the customers that dine at *La Dolce Vita* are not just seasonal patrons. "We see the same faces year after year," said Fuccilli. "About 60-70% of our customers in the summertime are regulars. "The summer reinvents us every year." Visitors can delight in an alcoholic beverages at the fully stocked bar open from May 1st until November 14th (due to their seasonal liquor license only). On November 15th guests are encouraged to bring their own wine and beer.

La Dolce Vita and *La Terrazza* are open from Sunday through Thursday 11:00 am to 10:00 pm. Doors close at 11:00 pm on weekends. Party packages are available for small or large events. The restaurant can accommodate 60 guests in the indoor dining area and 50 guests on the heated outdoor patio open all year round. Patrons are invited to celebrate Customer Appreciation Day on November 14th offering half price on their bar menu and alcohol to close out the summer season. To view their menu or make a reservation, visit their website at [http://](http://www.belmarrestaurant.com/)



www.belmarrestaurant.com/ or call 732.749.3177.



Turn page for Mossuto's Market & Cafe

Authentic Italian Ingredients...

MOSSUTO'S MARKET & CAFE WALL TOWNSHIP, NJ

What once was an Italian specialty shop operating out of a small house in Wall Township, New Jersey, is now a flourishing business. Owned and operated by Biagio Schiano, *Mossuto's Market & Café* is a one stop shop for customers to purchase authentic Italian ingredients, wine and dine in an intimate setting, or grab a quick bite or Neapolitan pizza at the counter. With two other restaurant locations, Schiano has no plans in slowing down anytime soon.



After buying the restaurant from his retired father in 2003, Schiano continued to expand the family business. "I didn't want to see the shop that my dad built for 40 years go away so I bought it," said Schiano. "I wanted to have some sort of legacy continue on." Much of the shop's success is from their authentic, home-made menu prepared in their Italian oven. All bread is hand rolled and made from organic top-quality products. "We make everything on our own," said Schiano. "There is not much that we serve that comes out of the box." Along with in-house dining and take-out, the restaurant also offers weekly events and entertainment. Giving customers the opportunity to sample from their collec-

"I didn't want to see the shop that my dad built for 40 years go away so I bought it. I wanted to have some sort of legacy continue on."

tion, the eatery hosts Wine Wednesdays every week from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm at a cost of \$20. The evening includes a full buffet, samplings of five different wines, and a history lesson of each wine. "When people dine with us they are sampling our food and wine that they can purchase in our market," said Schiano. "It's a great way for me to cross promote my own business." Other entertainment includes a DJ every Wednesday and Friday night and live music on Thursday nights.

MOSSUTO'S MARKET & CAFE

WALL TOWNSHIP, NJ

The casual, kid-friendly shop is also available for parties and full-service catering operated by Schiano's sister. "It is a very eclectic atmosphere when you get passed the fact that



you're sitting in a deli," said Schiano. In an effort to stand out from other restaurants, Schiano's mission was to create an informal dining experience serving high quality dishes. "I try to stay out of the traditional pizzeria mold," said Schiano. "Why should customers have to go to a stuffy place and get dressed up to have good food?"

Another business venture Schiano is working on is the construction of his new restaurant, *Benny's*, slated to open in March in Belmar, New Jersey. The eatery will be in a brewery where customers can sample beer and a variety of foods from their menu. "I love this business, I love people and I keep trying to make it better," said Schiano.

Mossuto's Market & Café is open for lunch, dinner, coffee and drinks Tuesday through Saturday from 9:00 am to 10:00 pm and Sunday for brunch from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. Happy Hour is from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm Tuesday through Friday featuring half price martinis. To make a reservation or view their menu, visit their Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/MossutosMarket/timeline?ref=page_internal or call 732.449.8058.



Turn page for Prohibition

The Jersey Shore's first Speakeasy bar...

PROHIBITION

ASBURY PARK, NJ

Just when you think Asbury Park, New Jersey could not get any cooler, a speakeasy comes to town! Known for its restaurants, nightlife and popular entertainment venue *The Stone Pony*, the Jersey Shore town recently welcomed bar and eatery *Prohibition* to Cookman Avenue. Taking over the space vacated by the former *Old Man Rafferty's*, the unique restaurant emulating a Prohibition-era speakeasy has become the talk of the town.



Owned by brothers Frank, Matthew, and Christopher Gullace, *Prohibition* is an expansion of business for the family. The boys' father, Frank Gullace, Sr. owned a bar in Jersey City, New Jersey for 35 years and he currently owns *The Shore House Bar & Grill* in Point Pleasant, New Jersey. "Asbury Park is a growing area with an established community. The space is great so I jumped right on it. It felt like the right time," said Frank Gullace about the restaurant's opening in September.

While still undergoing renovations, the restaurant presents a great mix between its bar and dining offerings. "For me it's better to be in an area that is popular," said Gullace. "It's better than owning a business on an island where people have to go out of their way to get to you." Providing elegant black and white motif dining as well as 48 beers on tap at the bar, Gullace emphasizes that *Prohibition* offers the best of both worlds. "It's up to us to run the bar correctly," said Gullace. "People are going to be there."

Prohibition caters to everyone. "Our other place, *The Shore House* is casual and laid back and I've always wanted more than that," said Gullace. "I want people to feel like they can casually walk in with friends and watch TV, but if they want they can also get dressed up and have a nice dinner."

PROHIBITION

ASBURY PARK, NJ

In the process of transitioning to a new menu including primarily steaks, chops and seafood, the eatery also entertains restaurant-goers with live music and events.



Guests are invited to a painting class hosted once a month by the "Jersey Shore Paint Party." The cost is \$35 a person and offers pay as you go food and drinks and instruction from professionals. "There are not a lot of places that do things like that," said Gullace. "We try to offer a variety of different events to give people a reason to come out." The venue will also be participating in Asbury Park's St. Patrick's Day festivities taking place on March 8, 2015, as well as other events. "We try to be as involved in the community as possible," continues Gullace. "Whenever something is going on in the area we are a part of it."

Prohibition is open Friday and Saturday from 12:00 pm to 2:00 am and Sunday from 11:00 am to 10:00 pm. Sunday Brunch is served from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm. The restaurant is closed Monday through Thursday for construction of the new speakeasy bar expected to open next month. Party packages and catering are available. Patio seating accommodates up to 100 guests. To view their menu, visit their website at <http://www.prohibitionnj.com/> or call 732.455.3808. For more information on *The Shore House Bar & Grill*, visit their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/ThePBShoreHouse>.



Turn page for Danny's Steakhouse & Sushi

1970s Celebrity Hotspot...

DANNY'S STEAKHOUSE & SUSHI RED BANK, NJ

Most lifelong Red Bank, New Jersey residents would recall the popular 1970's restaurant, Danny's Italian Restaurant that was made famous by its frequent celebrity visitors. With several renovations and menu changes over the years, the once-Italian restaurant has since become Danny's Steakhouse and Sushi and is still bringing in the business it did years ago.

It all started when owner, Danny Murphy bought the oldest pizzeria in Monmouth County, New Jersey in 1969 opening Danny's Italian Restaurant. Gaining much of his experience working with his mother, who owned a local eatery, Murphy quickly became one of the youngest restauranteurs to own a liquor license at the age of 26. "It became the neighborhood go-to Italian restaurant and stayed that way for a while," said Murphy.



As more Italian restaurants moved into the area, Murphy decided to adjust his menu. "There were too many Italian restaurants moving in, so I decided to change things up a bit," said Murphy. "A colleague of mine suggested that I turn the place into a steakhouse, which I knew nothing about at the time. I had to do a lot of homework." Murphy also opened several other establishments throughout his career including Matawan, New Jersey pub, The Church on Main Street, The Charlie Horse Café, in Middletown, New Jersey, and Nibbles, a Jewish-Italian diet deli in Ocean Township, New Jersey.

Currently, Danny's Steakhouse and Sushi serves a variety of dishes ranging from steak, sushi, seafood, burgers and pizza. Murphy, who began his career as a chef, often helps out in the kitchen any way he can. "What my chefs do in the kitchen nowadays is miles away from what I did in the Italian restaurant," said Murphy. "The chef I have now is the best I've ever had. You can't cook and run a restaurant. I enjoy the front of the house where I can watch my tables, and joke with the customers in a way that most people can't and get away with it."

DANNY'S STEAKHOUSE & SUSHI

RED BANK, NJ

Although the steakhouse does not offer extensive musical entertainment like it previously did over the past 47 years, Danny's has welcomed famous fac-



es including Billy Crystal, Bruce Springsteen, and Danny Devito as patrons. "For fifteen years we were a celebrity hangout," said Murphy. "Anyone that performed at the Garden State Arts Center in the 70's and early 80's came here."

"What my chefs do in the kitchen nowadays is miles away from what I did in the Italian restaurant"

Something else Murphy is known for is constantly changing his restaurant, which has been remodeled seven times since first opening. "You need to own your location and do things that attract new business," said Murphy. "I'm known as the restaurant that is constantly changing its image. Everyone always asks me, 'so what are you going to be this week?' I simply tell them, STILL IN BUSINESS." The next project Murphy is working on is updating the outside tables and chairs for the summer season.

After nearly 50 years in business, Murphy still cannot imagine doing anything else with his time. "People ask me if I would consider selling the restaurant and retiring, but what would I do, take up golf? I tried, I suck at it," said Murphy. "Every person I know who has sold a restaurant wanted to get back into it within a year or two. It's a very social business and they get bored and want to come back."

DANNY'S STEAKHOUSE & SUSHI

RED BANK, NJ



"Everyone always asks me, 'so what are you going to be this week?' I simply tell them, STILL IN BUSINESS"

Danny's Steakhouse and Sushi is open for lunch and dinner Monday through Sunday from 11:30 am to 12:00 am. Weekdays from 12:00 pm to 4:00 pm guests are invited to their Mad Men Lunch offering cocktails and lunch and an all-day happy hour. Both in-house and off-premise full service catering are available. All food is cooked on location. To view their menu or book a reservation, visit their website at <http://dannyssteakhouse.com/> or call 732.741.6900.



Turn page for Rella's Italian Tavern

Mom's Homemade Cooking...



RELLA'S ITALIAN TAVERN BRIELLE, NJ

"Suits or sandals, beach or boardroom," is the motto that *Rella's Italian Tavern* located in Brielle, New Jersey lives by. Owned and operated by brothers, Sam and Sal Chiarella, the restaurant provides guests with a taste of mom's homemade cooking in a comfortable environment. Named the "Third Best Pizza Joint in New Jersey" in 2014 by NJnews1.com, *Rella's Italian Tavern* has become a driving force in the local restaurant industry.

Sam Chiarella and his brother Sal first dabbled in the restaurant business working at a pizza shop on the Seaside Heights Boardwalk as teenagers. Following a dream of owning a restaurant together, the brothers opened Italian eatery *Fratello's*, in Sea Girt, New Jersey in 1997. Their determination to excel led to the success of their newest venture, *Rella's Italian Tavern*, which opened in 2009 in Brielle, New Jersey. "*Fratello's* had a sit down dining room seating and no entertainment; so we transformed *Rella's Italian Tavern* into a more family oriented place with entertainment," said Chiarella.

RELLA'S ITALIAN TAVERN

BRIELLE, NJ

Today, with seating for 200 people and more at two full-service bars, the restaurant serves a variety of Italian and tavern-style dishes ranging from pizza, pasta, burgers and wings. "Our menu is influenced by our mother who would come and cook homemade dishes that were mixed with her own culinary influence," said Chiarella. "Our

wings are most popular, which is where we get our tavern-style from." Sports fans also enjoy gathering at the bar on game days to watch 16 HD televisions. "We are very value oriented and offer quality food," says Chiarella. "Our bar area is always crowded no matter the time of year."



Guests are invited to indulge in daily specials including bar games and trivia Monday nights, Timeless Tuesdays, Wine Down Wednesdays, Guy's Night Out on Thursdays, and live music on the weekends. "Beat the Clock" Happy Hour is served every day from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm. The restaurant also had a celebrity appearance this past February from rock band, *Lifehouse* who played a free acoustic performance for a small number of fans. "Rella's has something for everyone," said Chiarella. "Whether you're coming from work or off the beach, we welcome all!"

Rella's Italian Tavern is open for lunch, dinner and drinks Monday through Friday from 3:00 pm to 2:00 am; Weekends from 11:30 am to midnight. Take-out and catering services are available. Two private party rooms host up to 60 people. An outdoor patio area will soon be open seating 45 patrons. To place an order or make a reservation, visit <http://www.rellastavern.com/index.html> or call 732.528.0034.



Turn page for Rooney's Oceanfront Restaurant

The First Oceanfront Restaurant...

ROONEY'S OCEANFRONT RESTAURANT LONG BRANCH, NJ

For two decades, *Rooney's Oceanfront Restaurant* in Long Branch, New Jersey has been dazzling customers with their delicious food, eclectic drink menu, and gorgeous oceanfront view. Celebrating the restaurant's 20 year anniversary on June 26th, 2015, General Manager, Darrell Wordelmann may be looking at his best summer yet with the addition of new Executive Chef, Thomas Schoborg.

Wordelmann discovered his passion for the restaurant industry as a busboy at age twelve at *Bart's Restaurant* in Matawan, New Jersey. He was later upgraded to bar-back at *MVP's Sports Café* in Aberdeen, New Jersey before receiving a bartending position at *The Varsity Club* in Fair Haven, New Jersey. "If there was one person out there that I would give credit to my success in the restaurant industry, it would be Mark Gola, General Manager of the *Tiger's Tale* in Montgomery, New Jersey," said Wordelmann. "He has a great personality and showed me the ropes of cooking."



When original owners Jack and Gayle Rooney opened their oceanfront restaurant in 1995 (now under new ownership), Wordelmann jumped at the chance to work for them. "What I saw at *Rooney's* was a place of volume and energy. It had what I loved," said Wordelmann who started out as a server and bartender before being promoted to General Manager at 25 years old. Describing the eatery as an upscale, casual dining experience serving American Seafood Cuisine, Wordelmann is proud of the restaurant's transformation over the years. "When we first opened, there was no Pier Village, Beachfront North or Asbury Park, really nothing as we were the first ones to be on the ocean," said Wordelmann. "Pretty much our slogan is 'It's a big ocean, someone has to embrace it!'" Most recently, the restaurant renovated the main patio adding ceiling lights and plans to update the inside bar. "We may have something up our sleeves that could be the WOW factor in the near future," said Wordelmann.

ROONEY'S OCEANFRONT RESTAURANT

LONG BRNACH, NJ

Known as the "Home of the Angry Lobster" and for their Raw Bar, *Rooney's Oceanfront Restaurant* also has received the Wine Spectator Award for 17 years, voted the Best of Monmouth County in 2014, and was announced the winner of the 2014 and 2015 Open Table's Diner's Choice Award. "I do believe we have the best bartending staff in the area," said Wordelmann. "With our panoramic ocean view, it's a great atmosphere." As the summer approaches, the restaurant is gearing up for another busy season with all hands on deck. "We



are one of the busiest restaurants with the smallest kitchen," said Wordelmann. "Easter is the first day of Spring Training, by Mother's Day we are in shape and by Father's Day it's a go!"

The staff is also excited about welcoming new Executive Chef, Thomas Schoborg to the team for what will be his first summer at the Jersey Shore. A graduate of the French Culinary Institute in New York City, Schoborg has worked at some of the most renowned restaurants in the country. "He has a southern style with a modern flare," said Wordelmann. "Between my experience here and his skills, I think we will go to the next level. I really think he'll become famous."

Despite the restaurant's success, Wordelmann has no plans to open an eatery of his own any time soon. "Everyone says 'why don't you open your own restaurant,' but I just love Rooney's and I have been the face of Rooney's for 20 years and plan on going 20 more," said Wordelmann. "The new ownership has given me new life and their dedication to making Rooney's one of the best places is what I needed to hear for my next 20 year stint."

ROONEY'S OCEANFRONT RESTAURANT

LONG BRNACH, NJ



Personally, Wordelmann is involved in fund-raising for The National Multiple Sclerosis Society in honor of his mother who passed away from the illness. "I had to start out young to help take care of my mother, but it really made me become the man

that I am today," said Wordelmann. "If I had to do everything in my life all over again, I would do the exact same thing. It's been a great first half and God willing I hope to have another great second half!" Wordelmann is also a supporter of the Wounded Warriors project and he hosts lunches for the Long Branch Rotary Club at the restaurant. "At the end of the day, I don't think that I need to own a restaurant because I already own the dead palm trees and the empty chairs," Wordelmann added. "But I do see myself writing a book so I can put the final stamp on this amazing ride."

Rooney's Oceanfront Restaurant is open Monday through Thursday from 11:30 am to 9:00 pm and Friday and Saturday until 10:00 pm. Sunday's hours are from 10:30 am to 9:00 pm. A Brunch Buffet is offered until 2:00 pm on Sundays. Live entertainment at the outdoor bar on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday evenings. Private party space and catering is available accommodating 510 patrons. To view their menu or make a reservation, visit <http://www.rooneysocean.com/> or call 732.440.3027.



Turn page for MJ's Pizza Bar & Grill

The Sports Bar Favorite...

MJ'S PIZZA BAR & GRILL NEPTUNE, NJ

Owning a restaurant was always the dream for two lifelong friends who became the masterminds behind the popular eatery, MJ's Pizza Bar & Grill. Within five years, Rob Webster and Angelo DiCapua turned their dream into reality quickly opening locations in Tinton Falls, Middletown, Neptune, and Matawan, New Jersey. The duo is excited to announce their newest venue, formerly known as the Cambridge Inn in Spotswood, New Jersey scheduled to open this May.

Ever since their friendship began in 1997, Webster, a former FBI agent and caterer at The Channel Club Marina in Monmouth Beach, New Jersey, and DiCapua, owner of Michael Angelo's pizzeria in Monmouth Beach, New Jersey, talked about opening a restaurant one day. In June 2010 they welcomed the first of a successful series of restaurants, MJ's Pizza Bar & Grill in Tinton Falls, New Jersey. "Every few years Rob would come to me saying he wanted to open a restaurant and one day we looked at a place and closed the deal in three weeks," said DiCapua.



Their restaurant fever soon took off, revealing three more New Jersey locations: Middletown in February 2011; Neptune in December 2011; and Matawan in July 2013. "It's something we always talked about that's different than a pizzeria," said DiCapua who at one time owned three Michael Angelo's pizzerias in Long Branch, Sea Girt, and Monmouth Beach, New Jersey. "It just felt more glamorous with a liquor license." At the Matawan location DiCapua and Webster also opened a banquet hall available for weddings and private affairs.

The business's success has not gone unnoticed, as they were voted one of the best sports bars in central New Jersey by the Asbury Park Press in 2012 and Best of Monmouth by Monmouth Health and Life Magazine in 2014. "It's a homey place," said DiCapua. "The bartenders and staff get to know everyone. We really excel with our food; our wings are some of the best around."

MJ'S PIZZA BAR & GRILL

NEPTUNE, NJ

Along with daily specials, guests can also enjoy live entertainment and game nights. "We started off every night with entertainment but now we've narrowed it down to five nights a week with a band or a deejay," said DiCapua. "Trivia nights are fun, but for some reason karaoke doesn't work as well in Neptune as it does in our other locations," added Webster. "We keep testing it and seeing what the customers want."

With what seems like always a new establishment in the works, the eatery has many loyal customers that have supported the business. "I think we give a lot for the money," said DiCapua. "Maybe we won't make as much, but we have a lot of repeat customers. Now with number five opening, people know the name." Their newest location will also have a private room for catering.

The owners look forward to upcoming events including the Long Branch Harley Davidson Bike Night held the third Tuesday of every month in the parking lot of their Neptune, New Jersey location. Also the 5th Annual MJ's Golf Outing takes place Monday, June 1, 2015 at the Jumping Brook Country Club in Neptune, New Jersey. All proceeds benefit Jared Gaedt and the Rainbow Foundation. "We are very big on donating and helping out," said DiCapua. "You get to a point when you're successful and giving back is just as important." They also sponsor local softball and baseball teams.

With five restaurants under their belt, it doesn't seem like the two are stopping just yet. "We've looked at hundreds of places but nothing is at the right price," said Webster. "Our next move should be Southern or Western New Jersey." "I think between us our goal is ten restaurants if we had to throw a number out," said DiCapua. "We're really excited for what's to come."

MJ's Pizza Bar & Grill opens at 11:00 am seven days a week for lunch and dinner. Exclusively at MJ's Buttonwood Manor is a brunch buffet every Sunday from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm including a prix-fixed menu. Catering, take-out, and outdoor seating is available. For upcoming events or to make a reservation, visit their website, <http://mjsrestaurant.com/> or call 732.918.9700.



Turn page for O'Connor's American Bar & Grill

The New Charley's Other Brother...

O'CONNOR'S AMERICAN BAR & GRILL

EASTAMPTON TOWNSHIP, NJ

A new name isn't all that customers will have to get used to at Irish pub, *O'Connor's American Bar & Grill*. Known for 40 years as *Charley's Other Brother*, the recently sold Eastampton, New Jersey eatery has passed the chef hat along to a new owner who is preparing to unveil a fresh remodel and updated menu this month.

Locals may recognize the current owner, Pat O'Connor from his previous experience in the industry as co-owner of *Cambridge Inn* and *Camelot Caterers* in Spotswood, New Jersey. His 20 year stint in the banquet hall scene gave him a lot of ideas to revamp the eatery with hopes to become a neighborhood favorite. "I felt a name change and update would bring new life to *Charley's*," said O'Connor, whose plans include refurbished flooring, bathrooms, tables, chairs, and dining rooms. "The restaurant is different than the *Cambridge Inn* and much bigger. I'm definitely going to key in on the banquets."



O'Connor is also redesigning the menu with upscale pub food including appetizers, sandwiches and other Irish specialties. The bar, surrounded by 14, fifty-inch TVs, will be fully stocked with 36 beers on tap and have an extensive beer and whisky selection. Additional staff members will also be hired upon reopening. "We did keep some of the staff," said O'Connor. "They were a little understaffed to begin with so we're looking to bring in about 40 more employees."

Although the restaurant has been under construction since the official closing of *Charley's Other Brother* on Memorial Day, loyal customers are eagerly awaiting the bar's grand opening. "I worked in *Charley's* for a couple of weeks before it closed so I got the opportunity to introduce myself to customers and let them know what's going on," said O'Connor. "I researched the area and the demographics before closing the deal. I'm very confident in the area."

O'CONNOR'S AMERICAN BAR & GRILL

EASTAMPTON TOWNSHIP, NJ

Despite the remodel, reservations are still pouring in since the restaurant has continued to honor parties and other functions. "It's challenging holding banquets during renovations," said O'Connor. The restaurant is totally shut down but the Banquet Room has a separate entrance so we closed off the restaurant part to keep everything separate from the parties. It's been stressful but we're getting great feedback." Events will be held in the Banquet Room accommodating 250 guests, as well as the Pub Room, which holds 80 and the Garden Room, which holds up to 40.

With the help of his wife, two sons and future daughter-in-law, O'Connor has had a positive support system backing him up on this journey. "My son Patrick worked at Cambridge Inn growing up," said O'Connor. My wife Terri will be here daily with me as well as my other son Sean managing our social media. Who knows, in 10 years when I'm ready to pack it in my kids might take over."

O'Connor is most looking forward to the construction being complete and focusing on parties and catering. "No more off-premise," said O'Connor. "That's a young-man's game. It beats you up and is a lot of work. I still love to do catering but all in one building is easier, especially since I don't have a partner anymore like I did at Cambridge Inn."

The restaurant is expected to open in mid-July with a generous welcoming from the town on the big day. "The town of Eastampton wants to do a ribbon cutting ceremony and help with press," said O'Connor. "We don't have an exact day yet but there will be an exclusive cocktail party followed by a soft opening. I'm excited to get the doors open and start meeting the neighborhood!"

O'Connor's American Bar & Grill will be open for lunch, dinner and drinks. Dine-in, take-out, and on premise catering will be available. Entertainment is scheduled to begin in September. For more information, e-mail hello@oconnorsmtholly.com or call 609.261.1555.



***Turn page for New Jersey Restaurant
& Hospitality Association***

The Leader of the Restaurant Industry...

NEW JERSEY RESTAURANT & HOSPITALITY ASSOCIATION

TRENTON NJ

The fate of the New Jersey restaurant industry is in good hands with Marilou Halvorsen leading the way. As President of the New Jersey Restaurant & Hospitality Association (NJRHA), located in Trenton, New Jersey, Halvorsen discusses the goals of the organization and the benefits it offers its members. The responsibilities of the association include: supporting New Jersey restaurants by providing them with opportunities for members to grow their businesses and making connections with other industry professionals.



With fourteen years as the Director of Marketing for Jenkinson's Boardwalk in Point Pleasant Beach, New Jersey and Casino Pier in Seaside Heights, New Jersey under her belt, Halvorsen was honored when the association called her to take over after former President and friend, Deborah Dowdell passed away. "When the position became available, it was a good time for me given my children were on their way to college and it was an excellent opportunity to advance my career," said Halvorsen. "I thought it was a good time with great progression and opportunity to advance my career." Catapulted into the hot seat as President of the NJRHA during the chaos that Hurricane Sandy ensued throughout the Garden State, Marilou Halvorsen had to spring into action fast.

The mission of the NJRHA is to support, educate and advocate; a motto that the organization takes very seriously to protect their members. "A big part of what we do is advocacy," said Halvorsen. "We monitor all legislation - anything that has to do with the restaurant and hospitality industry. The main thing is that we make sure that we are properly represented." Of about 18,000 local restaurant owners in the state, ten percent of them are members of the NJRHA.

NEW JERSEY RESTAURANT & HOSPITALITY ASSOCIATION

TRENTON, NJ

"In the past, the association was viewed as a more North Jersey fine dining organization," said Halvorsen. "We now truly represent all segments of the hospitality industry; fine dining, chains, independent restaurants as well as the lodging sector."

Members also have access to the *New Jersey Restaurant Educational Foundation* (NJREF) program, which helps young aspiring restaurateurs find their passion in the industry. The program offers ServSafe classes, educational seminars, networking events, and scholarship opportunities. "Education is a big component of food safety, alcohol management, and continuing education classes," said Halvorsen. The NJREF also hosts a ProStart program providing high school students with the opportunity to go head to head in a state-wide culinary and management competition. The first place team moves on to the National Competition to represent the State of New Jersey and compete for scholarships. "These programs are great because they give kids an investment in the future and knowledge in the industry," said Halvorsen.

Halvorsen particularly enjoys reading the stories from students who apply for the program. "Applicants don't necessarily have to have aspirations to go to a four year college to be considered for the scholarship. We try not to be too restrictive," said Halvorsen. "I love reading the applications because for many of these students, the money really does make a difference. We're really hoping to grow the program."

The association also organizes events throughout the year including the ProStart Golf Outing on September 28, 2015 where all proceeds benefit the scholarship program. Most recently announced, the Restaurateur of the Year Awards Gala, to be held at the Stone House in Stirling Ridge, New Jersey on November 30, 2015. The event is to honor the winner of New Jersey's Restaurateur of the Year, Steve Bidgood, owner of the Salt Creek Grille in Rumson and Princeton, New Jersey.

NEW JERSEY RESTAURANT & HOSPITALITY ASSOCIATION

EASTAMPTON TOWNSHIP, NJ

"A secretly collective committee comes together to choose a winner each year and about 400 people attend the ceremony. It's a pretty big turnout," said Halvorsen. Other awards that will be presented are the Deborah Roy Dowdell Lifetime Achievement Award, Gold Plate Award and the Hospitality Awards.



The organization helps restaurant goers as well with their new online Dining Guide. Accessed through the NJRHA's website, patrons can search establishments divided into various categories including white linen, diners, banquet halls, etc. "People call often asking for good recommendations," said Halvorsen. "It's funny how we've become sort of a referral." Only NJRHA members are listed in the Dining Guide ranging from 700 to up to 2,000 restaurants. "We hope that restaurants see the value in joining the association," added Halvorsen. "We are the only association that represents and protects this industry."

Patrons are encouraged to "like" their Facebook page New Jersey Restaurant Life, sponsored by the *New Jersey Restaurant and Hospitality Association*, which goes behind the scenes of New Jersey's local restaurants and historic eateries. "I can tell you single handedly that the generosity that restauranteurs have helping the community and employees is incredible," said Halvorsen. "Those are the stories that I like to tell."

To become a member of the *New Jersey Restaurant Association*, visit their website at <http://njra.org/>. To speak with a representative, call 800.848.6368 or email info@njra.org.



Turn page for Johnny Mac House of Spirits

The Head of the Asbury Park Zombies...

JOHNNY MAC HOUSE OF SPIRITS

ASBURY PARK, NJ

When talking about Johnny Mac House of Spirits, frequent customers may describe the business as “the bar with the free pizza and omelets.” Although this is a major advantage, there is more to the story for the Asbury Park hotspot. Owner John McGillion reveals his latest plans as well as some other interesting facts about the family-owned restaurant.

Since opening his first bar in October 1968, McGillion has owned 14 bars as recent as three years ago. He has since scaled back to 10 venues including those in Manhattan and Brooklyn. He is also the owner of Kim Marie’s Eat n Drink Away and the YMCA in Asbury Park, New Jersey. McGillion manages the local eateries with the help of his wife who oversees the New York locations. “My wife and I love the business,” said McGillion. “She has 15 years of restaurant experience and I’ve been at it 47 years.”

Johnny Mac House of Spirits first opened its doors on August 16, 2010 and has seen some major renovations. With a recently added outdoor patio, McGillion plans to expand the property, eventually, as tall as five stories. “Johnny Mac’s is my best



We have the college kids up to the Grandma’s. We have a very diverse crowd depending on the time of the week and the day. It’s not just a 21-year-old crowd.”

bar,” said McGillion. “It was supposed to be my last bar, so I had more time to conceptualize. Our other businesses are small, Brooklyn buildings.” The extension will include a banquet hall for weddings and parties and three new kitchens serving traditional Irish fare. “We started out with two bars here and now we have six,” said McGillion. “We still have a lot more work to do but it’s coming along nicely.”

JOHNNY MAC HOUSE OF SPIRITS

ASBURY PARK, NJ

The development also means more room for the unique decorations that cover the walls and ceilings, which McGillion picks out himself at various antique shops. "The decorating, that's all me, with the help of Adele," said McGillion. "She does the writing you see on the walls and tables and she and I come up with some of the writing."

The bar is also known for its fun atmosphere and entertainment featuring skeeball competitions, monthly speed dating sessions, music, and various games. "Skeeball and speed dating started in Brooklyn and we brought them here. They are all a plus," said McGillion. "They all attract different individuals. A very eclectic group." Other amusements proven to be popular are basketball, ping pong, checkers, chess, monopoly and a deejay. "We try to do things that other people aren't doing," said McGillion. "Some things we have that they don't."



One thing you do not see often in other restaurants in the area is giving away free food, which McGillion has been doing for years. "It was actually a mistake," admitted McGillion, who went on to explain how they started making pizzas after purchasing a previously owned Italian restaurant in Brooklyn, New York. "A brick-oven stove was left on the premises when we bought it," said McGillion. "We put that to our advantage and hired a pizza cook and sold pies for \$4 or \$5." With pizza sales not doing well, McGillion made the decision to start 'giving it away.' "At first, we were offering free pizza just on Mondays, but that ended up being our best day of the week. So we decided to give it away seven days," said McGillion. The bar also offers free omelets with a drink on Sundays from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm. "That also generates a different bunch of people."

JOHNNY MAC HOUSE OF SPIRITS

ASBURY PARK, NJ

McGillion credits much of the restaurant's success to the many events they host each year. Along with participating in several neighborhood bar crawls, the pub also celebrates every holiday with a party, including specials and giveaways. "We decorate for all the holidays." Also in the works is a canoe race slated for next summer. Then there is the very popular Train Run that takes place three times a year. "People gather here, get on a train, and have a choice of getting off at Bradley Beach, Spring Lakes, or Belmar. They choose how far they want to run back. It's a really fun day."

The most popular event for the bar is the annual Asbury Park Saint Patrick's Day Parade that kicks off the second Sunday in March. The New Jersey Zombie Walk, which was resurrected by McGillion this month, comes in a close second. "Jason Meehan who founded the parade couldn't do it anymore, but we couldn't afford to have the event cancelled," said McGillion. "So the only option was to buy it."

Other weekly events at the restaurant are Industry Night every Monday, Ladies Night on Wednesdays, and Country Music Night on Thursdays. Free pizza is served every day and omelet specials on Sundays. "We have the college kids up to the Grandma's. We have a very diverse crowd depending on the time of the week and the day. It's not just a 21-year-old crowd."

Johnny Mac House of Spirits is open seven days a week, 11:00 am to 2:00 am. Visit their website for more information on upcoming events and specials at <http://www.johnnymacbar.com/> or call 732.776.6666.



Turn page for Christine's Italian Ristorante

Best BYOB in Monmouth County...

CHRISTINE'S ITALIAN RISTORANTE

ATLANTIC HIGHLANDS, NJ

Less than ten years ago, Ron Marino was engulfed in the life of a Wall Street entrepreneur working in Manhattan, New York, and now he is the owner of one of the busiest restaurants at the Jersey Shore. *Christine's Italian Ristorante*, located in Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey has served famous faces, and been featured on several television shows in its three short years in business and the word is continuing to spread around town.

After hanging up his suit and tie in 2008, Marino took some time off from his 25-year-old career, focusing on his passion for the culinary arts. He spent summers working with a partner on some seasonal cooking jobs on the boardwalk before branching out on his own. "It gave me the opportunity to make some crazy dishes," said Marino. "That's when I realized that I wanted to own my own place because what I was doing was only seasonal."

Christine's Italian Ristorante took over the 130 year old building (the 2nd oldest building in town) in Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey in 2012, ten days before Hurricane Sandy devastated the area. The rookies immediately sprang into action and prepared meals for first responders during the chaotic time. "I hit the ground running," said Marino. "Everyone else followed suit. I'm proud of the staff."

The family-owned business, which occupies the venue of several other notable restaurants before it, had big shoes to fill upon opening three years ago. Popular eateries such as The Harbor Side, The Wine Loft and the Copper Canyon locational reside on the same street, First Avenue. "I always said that I wanted a restaurant that's fine dining but not stuffy; still casual," said Marino. "I'm really blessed, we fill up every night." Besides the area's impressive history, much of Marino's success stems from his homemade, original dishes. "I've traveled a lot. Most recipes are interpretations of where I've eaten," said Marino.



CHRISTINE'S ITALIAN RISTORANTE

ATLANTIC HIGHLANDS, NJ



"That's the things that I enjoy doing." The persistent chef joked that he spent five years trying to pinpoint the recipe of a meal he enjoyed at a restaurant in Long Island. "Wherever I go, I try everyone's food that I'm with and if I really like something, I asked the chef for the recipe. If the chef isn't willing to give it to me, I try to figure it out on my own and often times it comes out even better."

Crowd favorites from the menu include Veal Meatballs, Veal Chop, and their signature appetizer, Italian Eggrolls, which Marino relies heavily on fresh ingredients to perfect. "I was tired of going where everyone else goes to get my ingredients," said Marino. "I get them from different purveyors and I pick my own vegetables. It's all fresh, that's what I think makes it a step above everyone else." The restaurant has also received praise for recently being chosen as the Best BYOB Restaurant in Monmouth County by the Asbury Park Press, an honor for the employees who are mostly family and friends of the owner. "These guys are like my kids," said Marino. "The chefs do as well if not better than I do and the wait staff makes sure everyone is taken care of at all times. We have a really good reputation."

CHRISTINE'S ITALIAN RISTORANTE

ATLANTIC HIGHLANDS, NJ

"Wherever I go, I try everyone's food that I'm with and if I really like something, I asked the chef for the recipe. If the chef isn't willing to give it to me, I try to figure it out on my own and often times it comes out even better."

Several well-known names have taken a liking to the fine Italian cuisine including former Daily Show host, Jon Stewart, and cast members from the Bravo reality television show, The Real Housewives of New Jersey, which filmed a segment at the restaurant. "I treat everyone the same no matter who you are," said Marino. "If you do something different, it's not going to come out the way you want it to. I'm very proud that I do it that way, it's like a lie if you don't." The restaurant has also been featured on the entertainment series, Celebrity Taste Makers, where Bruce Springsteen and the E-Street Band drummer, Max Weinberg appeared as a celebrity guests to share his go-to meal when dining at the eatery.

Although weekends typically involve a waiting list for reservations, there are no plans for a second location anytime soon. "It's tough to reproduce something that is so quaint and unique," said Marino. "At the moment, that is off to the future." Guests can enjoy the newly added outdoor area offering much more availability for busy evenings. "I just wanted to get here; I didn't know that I was going to get here. Just proud that we are doing so well; takes a lot of work," said Marino. "I'm very happy, very grateful that things are running the way they are."

Christine's Italian Ristorante is open Tuesday through Sunday for dinner. Private party space can be reserved on weekends; upcharge on Friday and Saturday nights. On and off-premise catering is available as well. For more information, visit their website at ChristinesItalianDining.com or call 732.872.4790.



Turn page for Manny's Pizza, Subs, & Salads

Pier Village Pizza King...

MANNY'S PIZZA, SUBS, & SALADS LONG BRANCH, NJ

It takes a fellow Pier Village shop owner to know another good deal in Long Branch, New Jersey's Pier Village. That is why David Rothberg and Emmanuel Alvarado, owners and managers of the neighboring frozen yogurt shop, *Red Mango* decided to swoop in on a business opportunity. and open *Manny's Pizza, Subs & Salads* this past Memorial Day Weekend as the new favorite pizzeria in town.

After spending four years working together at *Red Mango*, Rothberg and Alvarado were itching with ideas to open their own business. "We were next door running *Red Mango* and we saw *Michael Angelo's* was for sale and we knew that was our chance," said Alvarado. "We had a great first summer, this summer was amazing!" The pizzeria also is the home of *Dough Mama*, a bagel shop serving all natural, hand-rolled, kettle boiled, kosher bagels. "In the summer it does really well. As good as any bagel store and better," said Alvarado. "So this place is really a pizzeria, deli, and bagel place."

Growing up in New York, the partners adopted a taste for Northern specialties including pizza and sandwiches. "We had this idea to emulate the type of sandwiches served up North, so we wanted to bring it to the shore," said Alvarado. "I'm from the Bronx so my goal was to bring the Bronx to the beach." The menu is comprised of fresh and original recipes orchestrated by Alvarado. Many of the dishes were inspired by family traditions, coupled with his own personal touch, as well as ideas from various ingredients he could find. "What distinguishes us is our grillers, oversized sandwiches, best ingredients and best bread," said Alvarado.



"It's the American Dream. We love what we do and that's what makes us better than anyone else."

MANNY'S PIZZA, SUBS & SALADS

LONG BRANCH, NJ

"The combination of the hot and the cold makes for a delicious sandwich and that is really what defines us." In addition to the menu adjustments, the pizzeria underwent some interior renovations including a fresh paint job, extended counter space, a new oven, deli, and make-your-own salad bar.

While the prime location does get a lot of foot traffic on a daily basis, the duo have also utilized other resources to spread the word of the new eatery. During the warmer months, they attempted to attract beachgoers with a cart fully equipped with a beverage station and hot stand. "We tried the cart but we weren't pleased with the quality of the food be-



cause it wasn't as fresh," said Alvarado. "Now we are focusing more on delivery. Anything you want delivered to the beach!" The restaurant also offers gluten free products consisting of pizza, sandwiches and pasta. Guests must call thirty minutes in advance for any gluten free item. "We guarantee it's worth the wait!" Customers can take advantage of their recently launched winter menu with reduced prices available from October 1st to March 31st.

As a spin-off from their original *Red Mango* concept offering party packages where kids can make their own sundaes at the yogurt chain, *Manny's Pizza* allows the little chefs to create their own personal pizza pies with all the fixings.

MANNY'S PIZZA, SUBS & SALADS

LONG BRANCH, NJ

Party-goers are given chef hats and aprons embroidered with the business's logo for children's enjoyment. A similar concept is in the works for adults. At a fixed price, participants can bring their own alcoholic beverages while they are taught by professionals on how to master a home-made pizza pie.

When asked if another location could open in the future, the partners did not count it out. "I want to," said Alvarado. I'm the kind of person where when an opportunity comes up, I'll take it." "It feels really good for kids from New York to open a business at the shore," added Rothberg, who currently owns four Red Mango venues. "It's the American Dream. We love what we do and that's what makes us better than anyone else."

Manny's Pizza, Subs & Salads is open Sunday through Thursday from 11:00 am to 9:00 pm; weekends until 10:00 pm. Dough Mama's hours are every day from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. Catering and delivery are available within a ten mile radius. Monmouth University students, alumni, employees and faculty members receive 10 percent discount. To view their full menu, visit <http://www.mannyspiervillage.com/> or call 732.222.8490.



Turn page for Stone Mandia, LLC

Trusted Attorney...

STONE MANDIA, LLC
NEPTUNE, NJ



When seeking a legal professional, the difficult part is not finding an attorney, but finding an attorney you can trust. For nearly 40 years Bielat Santore & Company, has relied on the expertise of senior partner Frank Mandia, Esquire and more recently on his son Jason Mandia, Attorney at Law and partner at Stone Mandia, LLC. With over 75 years of combined partner experience and background in the food and beverage in-

dustry, the Neptune, New Jersey-based law firm has helped hundreds of clients through legal matters, providing a leg up to their competitors in the restaurant industry.

Before he decided to pursue a career in law, Mandia got a taste of the hardships of the food service business by working various jobs in the field, including dishwasher, cook, waiter and bookkeeper. He later went on to manage several restaurants in the area including the former *Ichabod's Bar & Grill* and *Woody's Roadside Tavern* in Farmingdale, New Jersey. "My family has been in the restaurant industry for years," said Mandia. "I understand where a lot of our clients are coming from, since I've been exposed to every aspect of the business." Ultimately, the grueling hours in the kitchen along with battling opposing schedules with his newlywed wife, became a lot for the now father of two. "She would go to work at 4:00 am and I would be getting home at 3:00 am. We never had time to see each other," said Mandia. "It wasn't the number of hours, but the hours of separation. I didn't think working like that was going to last." Intrigued by the legal side of the business, Mandia soon hung up his apron and went straight to the books. After attending the University of Colorado Boulder, receiving a degree in Psychology, he continued his education at Seton Hall where he earned his law degree graduating cum laude. He began his practice in 2000 at his father's firm, Stone Mandia, LLC., and since that time has become one of the leading real estate transaction attorneys with concentrated knowledge in New Jersey liquor license law.

STONE MANDIA, LLC

NEPTUNE, NJ

Stone Mandia LLC. is known for their hands-on approach with their clients around the Garden State, primarily in Monmouth and Ocean Counties. The firm's areas of practice are personal injury, family law, real estate law and alcoholic beverage licensing. "Licensing work is one aspect. We do a lot of residential and commercial work on top of that," said Mandia who focuses on the transactional part of the business including handling real estate, sales and purchases of various businesses as well as violations and questions people may have once they receive their license. "We do a really good job representing a client," said Mandia. "I try to be as available as I can. They get my personal attention; I'm not handing them off to an associate, I'm doing all the work." The office also deals with matrimony work as well as personal injury and a broad spectrum of litigation matters. "Even though we're a small firm, we can offer a variety of service," said Mandia. "The trick is knowing what we can't do and directing the clients to the best professional for the matter even if it's not our firm."

Since moving their office to Neptune, New Jersey in 1998, Mandia's father and his partner, Richard Stone have used their connections in the industry to their advantage. "I have experience in the industry and my father has 40 plus years of experience," said Mandia. "We are able to incorporate our knowledge and service of the industry into our practice." The firm often relies on their loyal clients to further their success over the years, while only recently establishing a website and straying away from promotional advertising. "Word of mouth speaks volumes for us," said Mandia. "Stone Mandia has strong ties to the community. Our family has been in the area a very long time and we do our best to stay connected to the community."

For more information about the services at Stone Mandia, LLC., or for a free consultation, visit their website at www.stonemandia.com or call 732.774.0800.



Turn page for Breakers Kitchen & Tap

A Complete Renovation...

BREAKERS KITCHEN & TAP NEPTUNE, NJ

Upon walking into the Waretown, New Jersey restaurant, *Breaker's Kitchen and Tap*, employees are hard at work preparing for the day. The bartender is squeezing fresh lime juice to top off their specialty drinks, as the wait staff is tidying up each table with silverware and menus. Customers begin to arrive shortly after the doors open at 11:30 am for the lunchtime rush, as owners Kelly Ford and Katie Davis



immediately greet each guest. This is what to expect when visiting this new eatery, celebrating their "Grand Opening" early last month.

The location was home to the former restaurant and bar *Longshots*, which occupied the space until 2012. The building had remained idle until sister's Ford and Davis made an offer in January 2017. "The property was vacant for a while and the price kept going down until finally it hit our mark," said Ford. "We took it as a sign to purchase and move forward with our dream of running a restaurant." The location holds a special place in the girls' hearts as it also commemorates the final time they shared a beer with their father, who unexpectedly passed away one week after the three dined at *Longshots* together. Pictures of the family are currently displayed on the wall at the exact spot where the photos were taken that day.

With the help of Richard Santore, Bielat Santore & Company, Allenhurst, New Jersey, the broker for the sale, the sisters became proud owners of the Route 9 location on October 31, 2017. They have been restoring it ever since. "The building was in shambles after being closed for so long," said Ford. "Right away, the night we closed we got to work." Renovations included installing new windows, ceiling tiles, flooring; refinishing chairs and bar stools, steam cleaning the kitchen and painting the entire facility both inside and out, "About ninety percent is finished," said Ford. "We just need to add more things on the walls and a few other little things here and there."

BREAKERS KITCHEN & TAP

WARETOWN, NJ

With the help of their chef, Matt Kenney, the team was ready to introduce *Breaker's Kitchen & Tap* to the community, just in time for the scheduled February 9th Grand Opening. "We spent a couple of days fine tuning after a rough soft opening on February 6th," said Ford. "It was supposed to be invitation only, but people started flooding in. We've been packed ever since!" The sisters are no strangers to the hustle and bustle of the restaurant industry as they both began their careers as managers of *Macaroni Grill* in Dallas, Texas. "We eventually went our separate ways - myself pursuing a career in Education and Katie in Social Work – we never forgot that training," said Ford.

Hailing from Denver, Colorado, Kenney worked at various restaurants before landing the Head Chef position at *Breaker's Kitchen & Tap*. "We were excited when Matt came on board because he can incorporate some Denver flavors into our dishes," said Ford. "He added a lot of recipes to the menu." Some of Kenney's favorite creations are the 14 ounce Grilled Prime Bone-In Pork Chop topped off with a salt-pepper crust and dried cherry glaze and the Signature Crab Cakes with sautéed diced onions, celery, bell pepper and special seasoning.

Since the news broke that the quiet shore town was getting a new restaurant, the neighborhood has been more than welcoming. "Waretown has been very supportive and asked us if we would like to hold a ribbon cutting ceremony," said Ford. "People are just so excited about a new place down here." Their fresh ingredients, delicious food options and craft beer selection are not the only things that the sister's believe will make them stand out from their competitors in the area. The girls also made it a priority to provide a positive dining experience for all of patrons. "We strive to have the highest customer service and best hospitality around," said Ford. "We don't want any customer walking out of the restaurant with a bad experience. We will always take care of a guest if they had an unsatisfactory experience."

It is always all hands on deck for the duo who spend much of their time at the restaurant getting to know each customer. "One of us is here at all times to touch the tables and introduce ourselves," said Ford. Their hard work has not gone unnoticed as the *Breaker's Kitchen & Tap* Facebook page has nearly 2,000 followers and 250 reviews. "If you look at our reviews on Facebook, most are praising our customer service, which is a big focus of ours," said Ford.

BREAKERS KITCHEN & TAP

WARETOWN, NJ

The girls credit the positive feedback to a system they implemented using teal and white napkins to help the employees identify the new visitors. "We distribute white napkins to our first time visitors, and teal napkins to our regulars," said Ford. "We want to see more white napkins, that's the goal because that means we have more new customers." The restaurant will also be bringing in a lot of familiar faces as guests are getting more comfortable at the casual eatery. "It's great to hear people say 'we love the vibe. We needed a place like this!'" said Ford.

Breakers Kitchen & Tap is open Monday through Sunday from 11:30 am to 12:00 am. Guests are invited to enjoy live entertainment every weekend starting at 7:00 pm and Trivia every Tuesday at 7:00 pm. Takeout is also available. For more information, visit their website at <https://www.breakerskitchenandtap.com/> or call 609.622.2963.



Turn page for B2 Bistro + Bar

709 TO B2...

B2 BISTRO + BAR POINT PLEASANT BEACH, NJ



Red Bank, New Jersey residents have been graced with the ever-indulging *B2 Bistro + Bar* since the restaurant opened on Shrewsbury Avenue three years ago. Fans of the popular eatery are now gearing up for their second location opening its doors in Point Pleasant Beach, New Jersey this spring. Co-owner and Executive Chef, Cesare "Chez" De Chellis provides details on what to expect from the new hotspot.

Continuing to operate as *709*, while in the process of transitioning to *B2 Bistro + Bar*, the Point Pleasant Beach facility serves a wide variety of dishes prepared by Executive Chef Meg Lamanna, who's family opened the restaurant in 2012. Lamanna will continue as Executive Chef Lamanna after the transition to *B2 Bistro + Bar*, with guidance from De Chellis,

along with operating partner Stephen Valentine. As for the overall design of the restaurant, there will be major changes to the property that differ from the Red Bank location – which he operates with business partner Russell D'Anton - including plans to update the entranceway and complete renovation of all dining areas.

De Chellis is no stranger to the restaurant industry, with an impressive background of his own. "I always knew I wanted to cook," said De Chellis who developed much of his cooking skills from his family. "My dad always supported me. I remember being mesmerized watching my dad cook in the kitchen." The young chef even took a year off from high school to pursue his love for cooking, helping out at his aunt's restaurant in Italy, where he has dual citizenship. "Italy was the best experience that I ever had," said De Chellis. "It really solidified what I wanted to do; I learned a lot."

B2 BISTRO + BAR

POINT PLEASANT BEACH, NJ

Graduating at the top of his class at the Culinary Institute of America in 2004, De Chellis cultivated his skills in the kitchen working with Executive Chef Don Pintabona (formerly of Tribeca Grill, New York) and Chef Jimmy Canora (formerly of Delmonico's, New York) at Valentino's on the Green in New York. "As a sous chef, you start running the restaurant, taking the chef's job and essentially running them out of the kitchen a little bit," said De Chellis about what he learned working alongside top ranked chefs. "I want to see *B2 Bistro + Bar* continue to be successful and grow!"

De Chellis has a lot of plans up his chef's coat in the culinary department for Red Bank and Point Pleasant Beach guests. He regularly updates the menu four times a year. "I am constantly changing the menu because we get bored," said De Chellis. "I want to keep it fun, innovative, and new for the repeat customers." To keep each dish fresh and unique, the New Jersey native creates a base *B2 Bistro + Bar* menu including restaurant favorites. He then has free range to add whatever else he would like. "Mentoring is a big part of what I do here. I want to give back to the younger community so they can grow as well," said De Chellis. "We are all learning constantly from each other. The moment you stop learning is when you got to hang it up."

De Chellis is especially particular in the ingredients used in his recipes making sure that they are the freshest for his customers. "I want people to know that when they come to see me, they are getting the highest quality food at



the lowest quality price," said De Chellis. "I'm always in search for the best quality ingredients trying to create sustainability as well." The duo agrees that the Point Pleasant Beach menu will be based on whatever is in season, with plans of introducing fresh farm-to-table ingredients, a wood burning oven and localized pork and meats to the menu. "All of my recipes are based on my travels," said De Chellis. "You've got to cook from the heart and food has to make you feel something."

B2 BISTRO + BAR

POINT PLEASANT BEACH, NJ

As construction is about to begin at the Point Pleasant Beach location, the partners also plan to open another *B2 Bistro + Bar* in West Reading, Pennsylvania. "I want to build something that feels like home, or like guests are dining at their friend's home," said De Chellis about his vision for the restaurants.

B2 Bistro + Bar is located at 141 Shrewsbury Avenue in Red Bank, New Jersey. Guests can visit *709* at 709 Arnold Avenue in Point Pleasant Beach, New Jersey until the last week of April/early May when it is scheduled to relaunch to *B2 Bistro + Bar*. Go to their website for more information at <http://www.b2bistro.com/>.



Turn page for Charley's Ocean Grill

Waterfront View...

CHARLEY'S OCEAN GRILL LONG BRANCH, NJ



Dining with an ocean view does not have to wait until the summer months for patrons of *Charley's Ocean Grill* in Long Branch, New Jersey. While the shore town is often quieter in the off-season, the new owners of the popular summertime spot, Mario Magriplis and Frank Lambrinos hope to keep the momentum into the offseason as well. Magriplis provides *Bielat Santore & Company* with a first look at what changes to expect at the restaurant they recently purchased.

Working in the restaurant industry was part of growing up for both Lambrinos and Magriplis whose families excelled in the business. Magriplis lived in Canada and Greece where his family owned multiple restaurants and hotels, and Lambrinos was practically raised in the family business, the *Blue Swan Diner* in Ocean, NJ, which the duo also currently own.

"We both grew up in the business and both decided to leave our professional careers in order to go into business for ourselves," said Magriplis.

Selecting a location for their next business venture wasn't a difficult task for the partners who have had their eye on the area for some time. Both Magriplis' wife and Lambrinos grew up close to the beach neighborhood. "There's a lot going on in Long Branch. We're excited about the development and advancements," said Magriplis. "I'm from an island in Greece, so it was a great opportunity to be close to the ocean. Just coming here and looking at the beach fuels me for the rest of the day."

Since closing on the property in September of 2017, they have been slowly making updates to the restaurant. Recently the pair released a new menu, taking a cue from their customers on what kinds of dishes they would indulge in and introducing flavors that pair well with a seaside setting. Sourcing fresh seafood, good-quality meats and combining ocean-inspired cuisine is an important component in creating the recipes their guests are sure to love.

CHARLEY'S OCEAN GRILL

LONG BRANCH, NJ

"We want to incorporate things that people like to experience near the ocean and naturally you can see a Mediterranean influence in our new menu" said Magriplis. "Just because it's not summertime, doesn't mean you can't enjoy the shore!"



Before the big crowd rolls in on Memorial Day Weekend, the partners are focusing on building relationships with their local customers. "There is a seasonal effect to the business but we aim to build on our local following. Our

casual atmosphere and delicious food really do offer our patrons a local summer experience all year long," said Magriplis. "We are trying to build on that culture." Much of the restaurants' previous success is credited to the location and the people who have dined at the restaurant since the eatery opened in 1985, serving as a focal point of the community and a meeting place for locals. "The restaurant is a landmark. There is a lot of history in Long Branch, and *Charley's* is part of it," said Magriplis. Guests can expect familiar faces serving them as most of the employees working under the former proprietors are still on staff. "The staff is an integral component to running a successful restaurant. The right people elevate an establishment and we are lucky to be working with talented individuals that are also good people." Some additional developments include utilizing the upstairs banquet room for live music, specialty nights and VIP happy hours. They also plan to offer the available space for reservations and walk-ins when there is an influx in visitors. "We offer a unique experience, excellent food and drinks, with a casual setting," said Magriplis. "It wouldn't be a beach place if you have to wear a three-piece suit." A new web page is in the works as well, featuring a new cocktail menu inspired by the local beat. We want to offer cocktails and dishes that make you feel like you are on vacation" said Magriplis. "Though we offer a casual setting, our drinks and food are of an elevated standard" The partners have gotten to know most of the very satisfied local customers, but they are also looking forward to meeting new customers as business floods in this summer.

CHARLEY'S OCEAN GRILL

LONG BRANCH, NJ

Charley's Ocean Grill is open for lunch, dinner and drinks from 11:30 am until 2:00 am. Their banquet room seats 100 guests indoors with additional space at the cocktail bar and outdoor patio. Call the restaurant for a reservation at 732.222.4499 or visit their website at <https://www.charleysoceangrill.com/>.



Turn page for Fleming White Appraisals

Trusted Restaurant Appraisals...

FLEMING WHITE APPRAISALS COLONIA, NJ



Since the early 1980s, Bielat Santore & Company has recommended Fleming White Appraisals, Inc. for accurate commercial appraisals. Originated nearly 50 years by Carl Fleming, Michael White joined his uncle Carl as an appraiser and eventually became his partner. Specializing in commercial and residential real estate appraisals, the company also provides various services including valuations, lease analysis, litigation and condemnation to name a few. With thousands of appraisals under their belts, including hundreds of restaurant evaluations, the Colonia, New Jersey based company has both the experience and market data to complete any appraisal assignment.

Michael White's career in the appraisal business began in 1975, shortly after graduating from high school. In an effort to assist his uncle, who injured his arm, White offered to drive him to all of his appointments, where Fleming saw his potential in the business. White was invited by Fleming to work at the company and in July 1975, White made his first appraisal of a house in Little Silver, New Jersey. "Back then we were mainly doing residential and commercial appraisals," said White. "You didn't need a license in those days as long as you had customers who believed you could do it." Upon graduating from college in 1979, Fleming offered White a position with his company and by 1989, the two made their partnership official.

Today, Fleming White Appraisals Inc. is proudly approaching 10,000 total appraisals, including over 500 restaurant appraisals. "Getting to this stage in my career, I've appraised buildings when they were first built," said White. "I wish I kept photographs from years ago in the 70s and 80s." While the partners' primary territory has been New Jersey for years, White admits that he often comes across places he's never seen before. "You have to have a strong understanding of the market so I decided to focus in New Jersey," said White.

There are many factors to be considered when appraising a property, such as the condition of the real estate and the surrounding area. "I look for problems," said White. "We're not building inspectors. I look for obvious things like if it is maintained nicely." White also explains the importance of the location of the property.

FLEMING WHITE APPRAISALS

"I look around outside and research the market that the property is in; what's happening and if there are other buildings planned to be built or constructed," said White. "Good thing about living in the area is I know more about what is going on. The most fun part of the job is I love going out and seeing places and talking to people," said White. White documents his visits with photos, a physical description of the property, measurements of each room, and a floor plan if it is not already supplied by the owner to include in a report. "We look at the property independently and determine the value to see if it is sufficient to make the loan on the property," said White.

Above all, White stresses that the number one thing his company looks for when appraising a commercial property is finding the right comparable sales for the property or specialty restaurant. "Restaurants are a very specific and unique use," said White. "I feel we really need to use restaurant sales to measure comparable sales." When selling a restaurant, it is important for the appraiser to know the specifics of the sale including the motivation between the buyer and seller as well as what's included in the sale. "I know a lot of people in the business, specifically brokers, who will talk to me and give me these details," said White. "Without that, it can overstate or understate the value of the restaurant." Along with commercial and industrial appraisals, Fleming White Appraisals Inc. also specializes in green and sustainable buildings as they have been recognized by the Appraisal Institute in green and sustainable homes and solar energy. "The way the buildings are constructed is very innovative," said White. "It's a growing market; something that is very interesting to me and I try to stay on top of it."

White is excited about what is to come in the family business for him and his uncle - Fleming is currently in his late 80s and still does the occasional appraisal, while two of his sons continue to work in the business as well. "The last year or two has been a very active year," said White. "We get a lot of work towards the end of the year because people want to close within the year. All signs are pointing to another active year in 2018!"

Fleming White Appraisals Inc. is located at 2 Ridge Lane in Colonia, New Jersey. For all inquiries, contact 732.388.2177.



Turn page for Nettie's House of Spaghetti

New Proprietors...

NETTIE'S HOUSE OF SPAGHETTI TINTON FALLS, NJ



For days, people were dropping in to Nettie's House of Spaghetti, disappointed to discover that they had to wait until Wednesday, November 28, 2018 for the new Italian eatery's grand opening. "We'll be back!" they would say each time in anticipation to see the fresh restaurant that has taken over the long-standing staple, Luigi's Tavern, which operated at the Asbury Avenue location in Tinton Falls

for the past 60 years. New proprietors, Chris and Tania Calabrese aren't phased by the constant comparisons to the previous neighborhood hangout, only fueling their excitement that so many people are as eager for the launch as they are.

The Calabrese's have been dreaming of opening up a restaurant together since they met ten years ago while both working at Copper Canyon, a popular tapas and tequila bar featuring Southwestern cuisine in Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey. Chris was a server, Tania was a hostess and bussed tables during summer and winter breaks from school. Since then, they both continued to strive in the food and beverage business: Tania worked at The Meatball Shop in New York City where she gained experience in finance, human resources and restaurant consulting; Chris followed his passion for cooking, becoming a well-known chef at Asbury Park, New Jersey pizzeria-bar, Porta, before relocating to Jersey City to assist in the opening of its second location in 2011.

With over 30 years of collective experience in the restaurant industry, the dream of opening an eatery of their own never escaped their minds prompting them to finally make it a reality. After considering several locations in Northern New Jersey, they decided to move the operation to Monmouth County, New Jersey near the support of their family and friends to kick things off. It was there that they fell in love with the former Luigi's Tavern and could not wait to turn it into their own. "We didn't have anything in place," said Chris. "Richard (Santore of Bielat Santore & Company, the broker for the sale), brought it to us out of the blue."

The day Luigi's Tavern closed its doors on June 15, 2018, the Calabrese's claimed the keys on the town favorite. "We started planning and implementing the design immediately when we got the green light," said Tania.

NETTIE'S HOUSE OF SPAGHETTI

TINTON FALLS, NJ

"The opening date was originally scheduled for September," said Tania. "But it unexpectedly ended up taking us five months to flip." Although much of the establishment appears to look different for those who are familiar with the original layout, the new owners did try to keep some of the unique elements that visitors enjoyed including some of the booths, chairs and part of the bar area which was repurposed. "We tried to keep what we could," said Chris. "We like the old school feel of the place. Red sauce kind of joint," added Tania. "It's located outside of Asbury Park with its own parking lot, which is a huge thing for us and we love the bar!"

While Tania handles some managerial duties and the front end of the house, Chris is in the kitchen concocting the menu, with his team of 2 other high-level chefs, creating mostly homemade dishes including meatballs, spaghetti, fish, and some vegan and vegetarian options. "I'm a vegetarian so it was a requirement to have some of that on the menu," said Tania. "We wanted to make sure that there was protein in those dishes and not just pasta and salad only options." Their staff has been a large part of the creating process as most of their 20 employees are those they knew around the restaurant scene. "We barely did any outside hiring at all," said Tania. "Either we knew them through the restaurant world or knew them personally. Even our purveyors are our friends." One reliant staff member whose skills flourish behind the bar is Bar Manager, Craig Stewart who hailed from Porta in Asbury Park. "I've had a long-standing relationship with Chris and Tania and we've been able to work together and bring in so many people," said Stewart.

The group got to test the waters at Nettie's soft opening during the Thanksgiving weekend where friends, family and a small group of locals were invited to dine at the new hotspot. To their surprise, the large crowd reached almost maximum seating capacity each night as word of mouth of the long-awaited opening spread like wildfire. "The area was just in need of a really good Italian restaurant, so people are really excited about it," said Tania. "Things are going great so far," said Chris. "We'll really know when we're not in a controlled environment and people are just walking in off the streets."

The duo described the restaurant as a "modern take on old-school Italian," but admit that the inspiration for its development comes from Chris's grandmother, Antoinette, whom the restaurant is named after. The name Antoinette means "highly praise worthy" matching the eateries design which embodies a mid-century art-deco vibe as well as the logo of the perfecto sign. "The perfecto sign means, 'it's okay' and stereotypically Italians like to talk with their hands, so the perfecto sign is the closest symbol to resemble that," explained Tania.

What's next for the restaurateurs? "Soon we'd like to start serving lunch and offering catering and private parties," said Tania. "We want to expand, but one thing at a time. Maybe not another Nettie's but a different restaurant," said Tania.

NETTIE'S HOUSE OF SPAGHETTI

TINTON FALLS, NJ

Nettie's is open on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 5:00 pm to 10:00 pm, Fridays and Saturdays from 5:00 pm to 11:00 pm and Sundays from 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Visit their website to view their complete menu items and daily specials at <https://www.nettiesrestaurant.com/>. Social media users can also find them on Facebook and Instagram for additional restaurant updates.



To be featured in the Who's Who in the Restaurant Industry Series, contact Bielat Santore & Company at 732.531.4200

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