

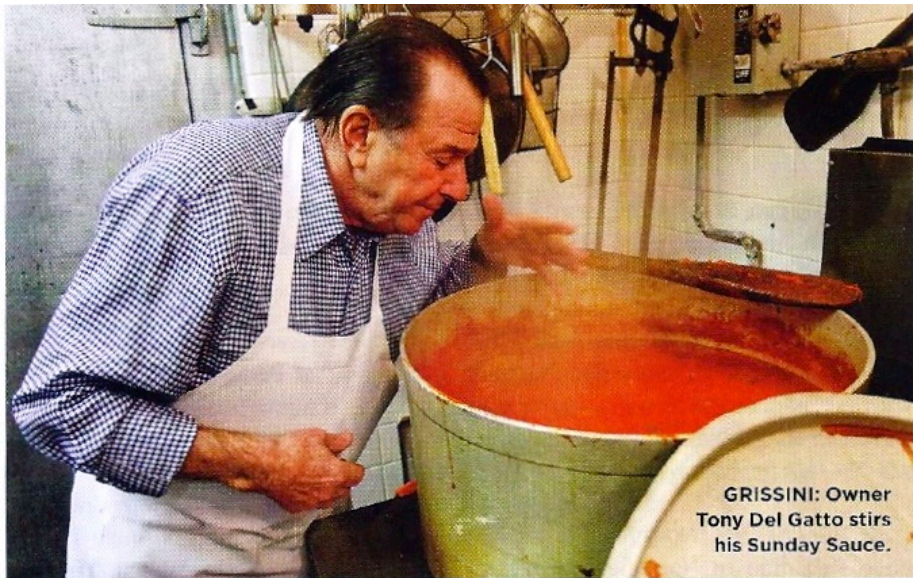
ITALIAN FOOD ISSUE

INSIDE: 2012 Dining Ballot

New Jersey

Live by it

MONTHLY



GRISSINI: Owner Tony Del Gatto stirs his Sunday Sauce.

PASS THE PASTA

JERSEY IS BLESSED WITH MANY COMPELLING ITALIAN RESTAURANTS. HERE ARE 16 OF OUR FAVORITES.

A MANO | Ridgewood

Aside from pizzas made in true (meaning gloriously puffy, chatty, chewy) Neapolitan style, A Mano dishes up a luscious, meaty lasagna. It also comes in a toothsome vegetable version. 24 Franklin Avenue, 201-493-2000, amanopizza.com.

ANJELICA'S | Sea Bright

With its dark interior, close tables and sociable noise, Anjelica's feels more like a restaurant in southern Italy than at the Jersey Shore. Although known for seafood dishes like angry lobster and zuppa di pesce, Anjelica's also turns out superior steaks and chops, including an epic,

28-ounce, grilled veal chop stuffed with melted fontina called "a porterhouse of veal." We call it magnificent. 1070 Ocean Avenue, 732-842-2800, angelicas.com.

DUE MARI | New Brunswick

The name means "two seas" in Italian. Representative of Due Mari's piscine delights is expertly grilled branzino, which cavorts happily with Caribbean white shrimp, escarole and oven-roasted tomatoes and is drizzled with black olive vinaigrette. Not that the pastas are slackers—especially not the robbiola cheese ravioli with sauces that change with the seasons. Likewise the outstanding desserts of

pastry chef Candace Ulloa. The lounge has its own appealing taverna menu, including brick-oven pizzas. 78 Albany Street, 732-296-1600, duemarinj.com.

ENO TERRA

Kingston
Hurricane Irene last August dumped several feet of water into this farm-to-table's supplementary basement kitchen. Eno Terra used the subsequent downtime to rethink the entire operation, making changes to the menu's structure, price points and offerings in order to mimic more closely those of a true enoteca. A fabulous meal can be had from starters alone—say, fire-roasted sweet peppers with white anchovies; slabs of tiny Fairy Tale eggplant parmigiano; and marinated cauliflower florettes tossed with hot soppressata and pine nuts. But if you ignore the pastas and entrees you'll miss out on, for example, palate-bracing arugula pesto cling-

