

Interview to chef Pasquale Martinelli

17 - venerdì - APR 2015

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Alimentazione, Brooklyn, Chef, Cucina, Mola, MoladiBari, PasqualeMartinelli, Polpo, USA

WANNA BE AMERICANO



Pasquale Martinelli

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« From Mola (Bari)'s octopus to New York's skyscrapers kitchens in wich he found his own way marrying an American girl ,daughter of parents from Mola (Bari) »

Renato Carosone, a famous Italian singer, in 1956 sang “ Tu vuo’ fa’ l’americano”, a title that seems made for Pasquale Martinelli. He emigrated in USA when he was a young boy ,as they used once, with a single luggage: his dreams and hopes and making a lot of sacrifices. He brought with himself in USA traditional gastronomy from Bari making taste it to american people wich today appreciate it thanks to his dishes.

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He talks in a funny way, with a curious Italian/Barese/American pronunciation that makes him a special, unique and very sociable person, qualities that have made him a famous person in the Big Apple.

We met him recently in Bari where he comes back from time to time for work and family reasons.

Chef Martinelli, “Wanna be Americano” our title says but.. “you were born in Italy!”

« Yes but now I am in New York City and here I always feel emotions in good and in evil. Like when conscription was compulsory, every citizen all over the world should spend at least 6 months here. It is a cosmopolitan town, with different culture’s people, a town in wich is not injury and in wich people respects every difference, of thoughts, fashion, or ethnicities, and this is fantastic because it allows people free expression »

How and when you discovered passion for cooking ?

« I think I was born with this passion »

But there was something or someone to move you towards catering and kitchen ?

« My mother gave me the push to frequent the Hotel management School and my dad produced Primitive wine so I remember that I ate tomato’ salads made with tomatoes from a Mola’s ward called “Lapenna”, famous for tomato’s plantations located at 20 mt from the sea. The sea breeze caressed them during the night so, the day after there was no need to wash tomatoes because they were perfectly savory and tasty. Mom sold them at 1000 £ per kilo and they were in great demand »



With Paul McCartney

What drives a young Italian boy from Mola who decided to emigrate ?

« The desire to let the world know the traditional Apulian cuisine and ambitions ,uman and professional »

On what do you base your cuisine ?

« In Apulian features of the territory : hospitality of the people of the South and the real home cooking that we now take for granted. In Mola, as in every other small city on the sea , when there is bad weather and nobody goes to fishing , we know that if we want to buy fish we can find alternatives but in our opinion the only option is fresh fish and we can find it only when it is fresh daily »



Born and grow up in Mola how important was for you ?

« We have in Mola the greatest cuisine of all, as in all small town located on the sea, because here is possible to eat healthy, tasty and high level. We have a great choice between vegetables, olive oil and fish, very important and healthy foods. In Mola, and in Apulia, we rarely eat beef. For some time we hear speak of Chianina, Fiorentina Steak.. In the past, to poverty and to save money we never ate meat. Our ancestors they never been to University but they knew how to cook tomatoes, they didi t thanks to the sunlights. So I tink that wasabi and the great Chef's creations but never forget trasitional and homemade cuisine »

What do you think about Vegetarianism and Veganism ?

« It is a personal choice mainly linked to sensitivity to animals, to the slaughter and killing of animals. I think that the best thing is equilibrium. I respect Vegetarian and Vegan choice but we should remember that human organism needs proteins and carbohydrates »



The Mola (Bari)'s octopus

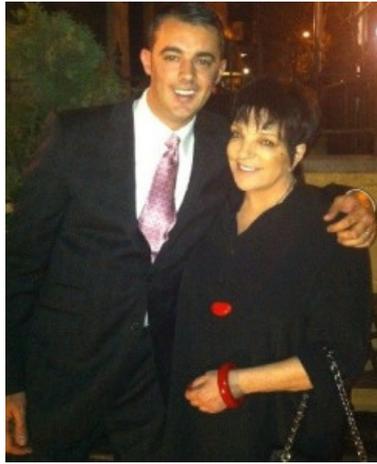
The dish that American people likes more ?

« Well... Octopus »

What American people thinks about Italian and Barese's cuisine ?

« That is the best in the world... and everywhere the opinion about it is the same. When I travel all over the world I use to promote

always Mola's cuisine ,not Apulia's cuisine. To respect other Apulian's resorts , in wich the same dish is different ,sometimes even in the name »



With Liza Minelli

But in USA is easy to find all the products that you need ?

« Yes, because in New York comes around all kind of food from all the world. In this town there are people of all nationalities so the melancholy of the typical products of their country pushes to import all products from around the world »

What would you bring to Usa from Mola and what you miss ?

« I'd bring some friend. Even if in USA I feel like home . Every year , while in Mola the Holy Friday's Procession takes place, people from Mola who lives in USA and in Brooklyn they organize the same Procession in the same day »

You work in exclusive New York's places frequented by famous people

« Yes, the very first of them was Chelsea Clinton (daughter of Bill and Hilary Clinton) »



With Francis Ford Coppola

Do you plan to come back in Apulia stably one day ?

« No, I don't think to live far from New York City anymore because I like the stile and the way of life of this town »

The essential ingredient for you ?

« Extra Virgin olive oil »

At home who cooks ?

« Me or my in-laws »

There is some famous Chef from which you draw inspiration ?

« No, because I don't consider myself a Chef. I am a homebody because my cuisine can be put into practice by anyone choosing genuine products. I use to define myself an Hospitality's Operator because I know well industry and because I have worked in kitchens. I have been Bartender and I won competitions when I was 13 to the Divinae Folliae in Bisceglie and to Bandiera Gialla , I 've been waiter, the receptionist, Maitre d'Hotel, Executive Chef, Competiotion's Judge.. for this reason I talk about Hospitality, because of my big experience in this sector »



With Jovanotti

Would you like to propose a your plate Italian/American to Apulian friends ?

« A Parmigiana's Veal, a typical Italian/American dish. A Veal cutlet in Milanese style topped with tomato sauce ,Pamigiano cheese and Mozzarella cheese. Then put it into the oven to dissolve the ingredients and the dish is ready »

Your projects for the future ?

« Is more than a project, it's a dream. To change bad eating habits in USA which cause obesity. I wish to start a franchising business of Fast Food ,however based on genuine food. It would be a revolution because in USA almost no one is accustomed to eating healthy. I 'd make available a special Menu with every product's name and the indication of the place of Southern Italy of origin »



With Robert Redford

To conclude , would you leave a message for Apulian people ?

« Yes, Apulian people should believe more in their traditions, in land resources, they should promote more and more Apulian cuisine which is the best of all . It needs to spread gastronomic culture but first of all to Apulian people , then to the rest of the world because we don't know it enough. In our Hotel schools young people should learn to cook typical products and dishes and finally other Italian dishes »

Chef, we thank you for your availability and we hope you achieve your dreams

« Thanks to you »



Pasquale Martinelli

Caption

Pasquale Martinelli ,39 years old ,married and father of an 8 years old girl ,was born in Mola di bari in October the 28th in 1975.

In 1990 he starts to work to Palace Hotel in Bari.

At the age of 17 he achieved the status of Market restaurant to the I.P.S.A.R. in Castellana Grotte (Bari). In 1995 he starts to work on the Cruises Ships “Princess Cruises” and then he moved to England, in Oxford where he attends an English School and where he worked in the famous Hotel “The Compleat Angler”, and he had the great honour to serve the Royal Family ,Queen Elisabeth II, Edimbourgh Duke and Prince Charles.

He came back again in Italy where he attended a Sommelier’s School in Milano and then the plunge. He flies in New York in 2000 where he begins the road to success. He is called to participate to many American culinary TV programs: “The Martha Stewart Show”, “Time Out”. Also begin collaborations with Chef Alain Ducasse and Jean Georges Vongerichten.

In 2009 he creates a Personal Chef, Catering and Gourmet Company (www.warmpalate.com).

He is coordinator in international events and also Hospitality Lecturer for the Ettore Maiorana Institute in Bari since 2012. Since the same year he is also Food and Wine Consultant for “Erminia “ restaurant in Manhattan, an exclusive place that counts among its customers many famous people . In occasion of the “Award sotto le stelle, Ricerca e Sapori della cucina pugliese” which was held in Park Avenue in the summer of 2014 at Gansevoort Luxury Resort he was awarded as Ambassador and landmark for Italian and Apulian cuisine in USA. In the summer of 2014 too he was proclaimed New York’s Console by the AIGS (Italian Academy of Historical Gastronomy). Recently, in March 2015 he received a new recognition from the ACB (Barese’ s Chef Association) as Apulian’s cuisine Ambassador abroad.



risposta a “Interview to chef Pasquale Martinelli”

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