

Matteo's Ristorante Italiano

Matteo's Ristorante Italiano of the Five Towns, located at 1455 Broadway in Hewlett, serves quality Italian cuisine "family style" to the sophisticated diner.

We arrived on a Sunday evening and most of the tables were filled with families enjoying a traditional night out to dinner. Several diners were sipping cocktails at the bar waiting to be seated. Joe escorted us to a comfortable corner table and Steven came over with his five years tenure as a waiter to greet and serve us.

The dining room was well lit and comfortable with retro-framed posters of several jesters eating pasta adorning its walls. Opera emanated from the sound system, which was hardly audible over the chatter from the seemingly content diners.

Gracing the table was a large bottle of Acqua Panna Natural Spring Water and San Pellegrino, a nice touch which I found missing from other Italian restaurants on the South Shore.

A glance at their wine list suggests enough connoisseurship for those of you with discriminating tastes. There are traditional Italian reds and whites along with a selection of some of the better California wines, both red and white. For celebrations, official or "of the moment", three quality champagnes can be ordered, including Dom Perignon.

A serving of bruschetta with fresh tomatoes on garlic bread was brought to the table while we listened to the evening's specials. On offer was a Chilean Sea Bass served in a Margarita

sauce of white wine prepared with chopped artichokes, fresh tomatoes and mushrooms or Grilled Salmon with chopped tomatoes, white wine, mushrooms, artichokes, scallions, and spinach or a more traditional Filet of Sole Oregonata.

Several appetizers were offered and each was outstanding. The fried calamari arrabiatta in a special spicy red sauce was excellent, as the sauce was deliciously spicy, as I like it. It may be a bit too spicy for the timid folks out there. An order of fried zucchini arrived with super skinny strips of zucchini that was light and flavorful. To add a few more pounds to my waistline, an order of baked clams and fried shrimp followed which confirmed for me my next day's exercise regime. All of the dishes were so delicious that I found it hard to limit my indulgence to just a few bites.

Luckily, their special salad came along to bring me back to moderation (diet patrol). A chopped salad of green leaf lettuce with black olives, salami, provolone, onions, tomato, pimento and parmesan cheese in a light vinaigrette, cleared our palates and prepared me for the next course.

Two fabulous pastas arrived. Linguine Alla Marechiara served in that famous spicy red sauce with clams garlic shrimp and fresh cloves of garlic was divine! I am a seafood lover in addition to a lover of quality marinara sauce, so this really hit the spot. My friend feasted on the Fettucine Alfredo, which was as rich and heavy as the dish calls for, even

before the fresh parmesan was added. One bite is heavenly, more, for me, is too much. It was excellent, for those of you with faster metabolisms, so please, mangia, mangia!

I didn't think I would have room for the main course, but when it arrived, its aroma was so inviting that somehow, somewhere, I managed to taste the luscious salmon with chopped tomatoes in a white wine sauce prepared with mushrooms, artichokes, scallions and spinach. It was fabulous!

My friend feasted on their very special veal chop Valdostano, a double sized plate accommodating the pounded veal chop topped with their own special valdostano sauce, browned and sautéed with fresh mushrooms, onions, light marsala wine and topped with fresh melted mozzarella and thinly sliced prosciutto served over julienne fries! More than a man's mouthful! This dish is cooked to order, served on the bone and is usually for two to share.

Actually, all specials are prepared either for one, or for two and the pastas are cooked fresh by order and are also prepared family style, for two.

For the finale, we were served an assortment of their fine desserts. Their famous Matteo's Napoleon, "a slice of heaven", as the waiter described it, was surprisingly light and was served with fresh whipped cream and had a lite pastry inside. It was divine! The cool, smooth sorbets are served in a real coconut shell and are offered in apple, orange-lemon, coconut, pine-

Matteo's Italian Ristorante

Open Seven Days
1455 Broadway, Hewlett, NY 11557
516-374-0627
www.matteosrestaurant.com

Gift Certificates Available
Private Room

Appetizers from
\$6.95 (half order) - \$16.95 (full order)

Entrees from
\$14.95 (half order) - \$38.95 (full order)

apple or melon flavors, a refreshing exclamation point for the end of this meal. The authentic Tartufo Italian ice cream was fabulous and was accented with a sprinkle of almond shavings. Other yummy temptations included a warm chocolate brownie, chocolate mousse cake, traditional canolis, tiramisu, and Italian cheesecake.

It is no wonder that Matteo's has three other locations in the Long Island area including Roslyn, Bellmore and Huntington and has added a Boca Raton outlet in the last 2 years. Their fine food, excellent service and management will exceed your expectations for Southern Italian cuisine!

Mangia, mangia!
See you there!

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