



World cuisine with Italian Flavor

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Visitors at restaurant Il Ritorno enjoy the privilege of sampling delicious Italian cuisine garnished with the magical touch of his owner and master chef Antonio D'Alaimo

Very few Italian restaurants in Costa Rica have that unique combination of serving the best traditional Italian cuisine combined with the international experience of a chef trained in some of the world's most demanding capitals of gastronomy. Antonio D'Alaimo, Chef and Owner of Il Ritorno grew up in a tiny village in the South of Italy, learning his first steps in Italian Cuisine from his mother and grandmother. There is when tradition began in Tony's life, however he was then taught in the most demanding scene of gastronomy, completing his training and acquiring experience in New York and Chicago.

With those two poles as cornerstones for his resume, Tony moved then to Costa Rica when he first open Il Ponte Vecchio and then five years ago established Il Ritono, a cozy, little place located at Casa Italia, the house of Italian culture in San Jose, Costa Rica.

I don't know how many Italian residents visit Tony's restaurant in Costa Rica but I can assure you that many Costa Ricans as well as foreigners are regulars at Tony's Il Ritorno. And the secret of his success is a combination of superb taste, great food presentation as well as his ability as host and and be a great entertainer.

Tony is not a tall person but he is got a heart and he serves it on every dish. He is a friendly looking chap, always smiling and willing to greet everybody. From notorious local personalities to the most low profile visitor, Tony seems to know everyone sitting at his restaurant; so every now and then he flashes his personality out from the kitchen and walks around the restaurant's dining area greeting everyone and spending time here and there, either chatting, making jokes or simply explaining the abc of this or that dish.

Some dinners refuse to read the menu and always ask for Tony in order to listen to his suggestion for lunch or dinner; sometimes those are combinations not even included in the menú so they have been just assembled at the moment by Tony, in order to please the gourmet's desires. At Tony's places dinners do not feed themselves, they celebrate gastronomy.





Tony is got a good spoon, a great attitude, friendly and talkative as he is so we feel at home everytime we visit Il Ritorno at Casa Italia. At the dining area Tony is backed up by Toño and Charlie, two great interpreters of the diners' desires while visiting the restaurant. They both have worked for Tony for more than ten years and they are capable to show the attitude, the entertainer concept the master chef dominates and above all, the knowledge they have acquired throughout the years with Tony about gastronomy in order to be able to talk about simple, international and superb tasting cuisine.

As a visitor to Il Ritorno you can either take the easy way and sample the menu or simply ask Tony for his suggestions. This time we choose the second option and as appetizer he created a mashed potatoe salad combined with tuna, mini tomatoe and parmesan cheese, crowned in its center with tender carpaccio decorated with black olives. Bathed with olive oil as well as a sprinkled combination of salt and pepper, this delicious adventures made us more eager for a lighter, tasty main course.

His master piece this time was a whole Red Snapper wrapped in aluminium foil and they baked. Served bathed by tomatoe sauce and tender onions as garnish we had vegetables and Jumbo shrimps garlic sauteed. What a superb dining experience. A pacifi fish served on a more tropical concept with an unforgettttable Mediterranean extravaganza.

For dessert we ordered Lemon Sorbeit, served on a lemon skin body. It was sweet, light as well as a superb palate cleaner, which it open room for a warm glass of cognac while talking to Tony about the superb tasting experience of this great, unplanned combination of tropical Pacific seafood products, conceived as a whole withhis Italian traditional commitment to superb taste. Strong taste combined with light components to give us as a result a great gourmet experience in one of the most spectacular restaurants in town. So next time you are in San Jose, don't miss Tony's Il Ritorno. We strongly invite you to visit it!

