

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Fluent in Italian

Second Cherokee location a tasty testament to success

By H.M. CAULEY

For the Journal-Constitution

Diners in the Woodstock area may be familiar with Taste of Italy on Old Highway 5 that has been around since 2004. Now they'll find more of their favorites in a second Cherokee location. Owner Gino Schiano Moriello, who hails from Naples, Italy, recently opened a sister operation on Ga. 92.

The new building in the Shops of Woodstock seats about 40, with full service for lunch and dinner. The menu is heavy on classic Italian dishes, but it also offers a range of sandwiches and subs and desserts.

First, the pies

Although the extensive menu offers an array of options, it's the pizzas that get the most attention, Moriello said.

"Our New York-style pizzas sell the best, but we have a new one that's also very popular," he said. "I call it a 'bruschetta pizza'—it's square, like a Sicilian, but not as thick. I'd say it's halfway between a New York and Sicilian, and loaded with fresh Italian cheeses."

Other pies are topped with veggies, a variety of meats, fresh tomato sauce and garlic, or white ingredients (ricotta cheese, garlic and mozzarella). They're served in 14- and 16-inch sizes, or in a 16-inch Sicilian square version. Prices range from \$11.95 to \$19.95.

Among the entrees, Moriello's homemade lasagna hits a home run with diners who dig into the layers of beef, ham and cheeses. Baked ziti, manicotti and stuffed shells come out of the oven, along with eggplant, chicken or veal parmigiana. Other classics include cheese ravioli, tortellini, gnocchi, chicken Alfredo and spaghetti with meat, sausage or clam sauce.

Start with a traditional antipasto of meats, cheese and vegetables, fried calamari or bruschetta. Beyond pasta, the menu runs through stromboli, calzones and hot and cold subs made from chicken, steak, veal, tuna, ham and salami.

Be sure to check out the desserts, imported from Italy. The selection varies but frequently features cannoli, tiramisu, cheesecake, a Black Forest cake and two gelatos.

From the beverage counter

It's all soft at the Taste, with teas, coffees, fruit punches and an assortment of sodas.

TASTE OF ITALY

- **Where:** 8265 Highway 92, Woodstock, 770-928-3764
- **Signature dishes:** Bruschetta pizza, lasagna
- **Entree prices:** \$6.50–\$19.95
- **Hours:** 11 a.m.–10 p.m. Mondays–Thursdays; 11 a.m.–10:30 p.m. Fridays–Saturdays; noon–9 p.m. Sundays
- **Reservations:** Yes
- **Credit cards:** Yes
- **Web site:** None

Taste of Italy

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