

Dining

# Finding Mimmo

## Mimmo's 30A Ristorante Italiano

By MARTA ROSE-THORPE

I've been hearing great things about Mimmo's 30A, and my husband Jimmy and I were fortunate to dine there recently for our first time, although the establishment has been open just over a year. Nestled on 30A in Blue Mountain Beach, Mimmo's was alive with vitality and people – yet felt somehow relaxed and laid back at the same time. Mimmo's wife, Meghan Hall, is the décor guru behind this warm and beautiful "Old World" yet modern establishment.

General Manager Deni brought over aperitifs to get us started, and it was immediately apparent that Mimmo's cocktails are Next-Level! An Espresso Martini arrived for me, chilled and frothy, made with St. Augustine Vodka, Borghetti Caffè Espresso Liqueur, and espresso. Smooth, sweet, and strong! Jimmy ordered the Costa Nostra made with Mimmo's Knob Creek, bitters, orange zest and smoked oak. Bursting with orange essence, a large, square ice cube filled the glass; a slice of orange rind was fastened to its side with a miniature clothespin. Two other Mimmo's cocktail favorites are Death

Rides a Horse (30A Reposado Agave, lime, squid ink agave, blood orange, and Calabrian Sea salt) and the Barberini (Malfy 'Con Limone' Gin, lavender, Old-Florida honey, and lemon). Mimmo's has an extensive cocktail, wine and beer menu.

We loved our server Dayna... so friendly, so sweet, and so knowledgeable. She brought fresh bread with dipping oil infused with basil, chives, spicy red peppers, and parmesan, and we could've made it an entire meal, it was so good. We decided upon a bottle of Tall Dark Stranger Malbec to accompany our dinner... perfectly smooth and full-bodied.

For our first course, Mimmo sent out his Caprese salad: fresh, colorful, and bursting with flavors. This was no ordinary Caprese. The most tender, creamy burrata was topped with microgreens, micro purple basil, and heirloom tomatoes that Mimmo imports from Italy (along with numerous other ingredients). A pesto drizzle completed the dish. Now, I must note, somewhere in my restaurant reviews I always mention the culinary trilogy of the Three T's: Precision in Taste,



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Texture, and Temperature. The Caprese had all of this. But that night I realized a fourth T needed to join the band: Tint. The dish's colors were dazzling in a palette of bright and dark reds, yellow, green, white, and deep purple.

Next, Dayna brought us a Pistachio Pizza: perfectly golden crust topped with pesto Genovese, pancetta, cherry tomatoes, and fresh mozzarella. Jimmy noted the creaminess of the pesto (with delicious pistachios blended in) paired well with the salty pancetta.

At this point, Mimmo sat and joined us, and we had a won-

derful conversation about how this all started. Personable and warm, Mimmo hails from Sicily, Italy, and lived in England for five years before coming to the U.S. fourteen years ago. In 2007 he opened Fat Clemenza's in Destin, and in 2013, opened the first Mimmo's, located in Destin. Mimmo's 30A came along in November 2022. The key to success, he says, is consistency and keeping a fantastic team. "We focus on finding and keeping good people, and we are always training," he says.

Mimmo is proud of his pasta and loves getting creative with

it, explaining, "We play with the pasta. The red manicotti, for instance, is made with the juice of roasted red peppers." His pasta is all homemade and the flour is imported from Italy. "We cook with love," he continues. "Simple ingredients. Fresh fish every day; fresh produce arrives daily." I ask him to name one of his most unique dishes. The Gnocchi with pistachios and burrata topped with cherry tomatoes is his answer.

And then two more dishes arrived that knocked our socks off. The first was Wild Mushroom Ravioli with honey walnuts in a



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Serving authentic Italian dishes bursting with flavor and color. Our vibrant venue is perfect for an evening out with friends or a stunning backdrop for lunch. Mimmo's has created an atmosphere where people love to come to laugh, relax, have fun, create memories, bond with friends and enjoy good wine, crafted cocktails & impeccable food with exceptional hospitality!

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creamy sauce. One bite into the ravioli made my pulse quicken. Those honey walnuts gave the otherwise savory dish a sweet crunch that stole my heart. The other dish was Mimmo's famous Pappardelle all'Aragosta, featuring tender wide noodles and huge chunks of succulent, juicy lobster meat. This paired beautifully with sweet cherry tomatoes, tender mushrooms, and a subtle tomato basil cream sauce – with a toss of microgreens. Another fabulous “Four T” dish!

For our final course, Dayna brought us Pistachio Tiramisu, an off-the-menu creation. Layers of chocolate and vanilla custard layered with cake then topped with whipped cream and – you guessed it – pistachios. Rich but not too rich, said Jim. Sweet but not too sweet. Just perfect. If you haven't yet guessed, Mimmo loves pistachios! “The best pistachios in the world are grown in Sic-



ily,” he declares.

Throughout the evening Mimmo strolls the restaurant floor, chatting, meeting, and greeting in his warm, welcoming way. “I'm all in... I'm involved. I keep eyes on everything. Watch everything. Taste everything. It's about the whole dining experience,” he explains, “from atmosphere to service to food. Our goal is that when someone comes through the door, they want to come back.”

Mimmo's is located at 2700 W. County Hwy. 30A in Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459. Hours are Sunday - Thursday 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., Friday and Saturday 5 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., with Happy Hour Monday - Friday 3 to 5 p.m. Mimmo's has a side room for private affairs and monthly wine dinners that seats 42, organized by Deni Gilson. For more information visit [mimmos.com](http://mimmos.com).



## There's A New Chef In Town!

Juan Bochenski is the new executive chef at Hotel Effie. Bochenski helms the kitchen at the hotel's signature restaurant, Ovide, and oversees all aspects of food and beverage operations across the hotel's four restaurant outlets and in-room dining. An elegant, culinary adventure, Ovide brings together classic Gulf Coast flavors and southern culinary traditions fueled by a passion for sustainability and seasonality that gives each bite incredible flavor. To do that, Bochenski works closely with local farmers and vendors to serve farm-fresh and sustainable ingredients whenever possible.

Born in Buenos Aires,

Argentina, Bochenski has worked at luxury resorts across the globe, including Arcis Golf in Dallas; Baker's Bay Golf & Ocean Club on Great Guana Cay, Abaco, Bahamas; Resorts & Residences by Cuisinart on Anguilla; Jade Mountain and Anse Chastanet resorts on St. Lucia; and Rosewood Hotels & Resorts' Inn of the Anasazi in Santa Fe, New Mexico; among others.

Ovide's new dinner menu is available Friday through Saturday, from 5 - 10 p.m., and Sunday through Thursday, from 5- 9 p.m. including choices from the raw oyster bar and delicious desserts.