

dining around



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Antica Trattoria is a La Mesa gem

Two childhood friends from Sicily are living their dream at their charming new Italian restaurant, Antica Trattoria (formerly Lader's) at Lake Murray Boulevard and Baltimore Drive.

Piero La Rosa and chef Francesco Basile came to the U.S. from the villages of Particello and Santa Elia, near Palermo. They worked several San Diego area restaurants, including Panovino in the Gaslamp, saved their money and recently opened their own place. It's a beautifully designed little restaurant that brings to the area a taste of Gaslamp style contemporary Tuscan cuisine.



Piero La Rosa (left) and Francesco Basile.

Antica's food is made fresh from scratch, including superb ravioli and the fabulous bread. For dinner the menu has antipasti starters such as Portobello capriccioso (roasted Portobello topped with Parmesan, breadcrumbs and pine nuts in a Marsala veal sauce). Also listed are calamari fritti, filet mignon and salmon carpaccio and bruschetta.

For your main course there are more than a dozen pasta selections, grilled meats and seafood.

Among the pastas ravioli Monte Carlo is a wonderful standout, (made with cheese and sautéed with shrimp in Marsala/tomato cream sauce), as is the bowtie pasta with fresh salmon, shallots, green peppercorns and brandy cream sauce. For a robust zesty flavor try the penne arrabbiatta (spicy with garlic and tomato sauce)

Highlights of the "I Secondi" list are definitely the delicious oven roast pork loin, a memorable success with tender pork in a peppercorn crust, sliced thin over caramelized apples that have been sautéed in a Barolo wine reduction also suggested are veal Marsala, salmon Antica (sautéed with white onions, golden raisins, pine nuts and white vinegar) and the char-broiled rib-eye steak. For dessert order the fantastic crème brulee! Call (619) 463-9919.