

The suburban neighborhood of Whitestone, New York has a secret—but not for long. Located at 22-30 154th Street, Trattoria 23 Pizzeria & Italian Restaurant is the final realization of a dream for husband and wife team Peter and Jonette Agouria, melding award-winning pizza and traditional Italian fare so painstakingly crafted it requires a 3 a.m. wake up for Peter to shop for the day's ingredients, including buying homemade pasta from a local Italian specialty store.

Peter is no stranger to the restaurant business, having worked at Gigi's Pizzeria in Whitestone from the age of 16 and later partnering with one of the pizzeria's former owners to open his own of the same name. Next he would buy and still currently owns VIP Pizza in Bayside, all the while perfecting his pizza recipe which would one day garner the "Best of Boro" award two years in a row. When Peter and Jonette bought and renovated Nonna's Pizzeria & Trattoria, it was the chance to champion the best of both worlds.

The first thing you'll notice upon stepping inside the restaurant's rustically decorated space are ornate murals of Italy adorning the walls. A close second will be the aromas emanating from the wood-fired grill anchoring the kitchen, imparting a warm, inviting vibe and approachable atmosphere. Devoted to updating and refining while maintaining allegiance to classic recipes, it's here that every dish is made fresh daily with the most local, seasonal ingredients.

Kick off your meal with popular appetizers such as the Clams Casino or Antipasto Piatto before moving on to signature entrees like Shrimp Alla Nonna or Chicken Francese, each an experience in their own right. Pair your dish with handcrafted cocktails or an international specialty beer selection for the perfect balance. Finally, conclude your foray with a staple of Italian decadence: the Tiramisu.

Trattoria 23 maintains its versatility with family-friendly events including a pie-eating contest and Murder Mystery Night, the next of which is already sold out. Dining in, take-out, banquets and parties for any occasion are on offer, as well as on- and off-premises catering. Corporate accounts are welcome.

The Whitestone business also keeps dining out doable with money-saving specials: 2 slices of pizza and a beverage for \$5, an 8" personal pizza for \$5.50, buy 1 pie and get the second pie free (same or lesser value) Tuesday through Thursday, half-priced bottles of wine every Wednesday, and special menus and food specials on all holidays are ways they keep authentic Italian accessible and affordable.

Peter will be attending the International Pizza Expo in Las Vegas in March. There, he'll participate in their International Pizza Challenge and compete with award-winning chefs from around the world. If the past is any indication, only delicious things are to come. Stay tuned to see what's next!