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"Harmony on the Beach"



“It Just Comes Natural” to Chef Josh Sziranko

by Robin G. Coles

“They called me out of the kitchen,” says Chef Josh, “and gave me a standing ovation.” That’s when he knew he was in the right profession. It was back in 2001 while working at Al Dente Restaurante in Boston, MA. Chef Josh had come up with a dish called Chicken Venesia. One night, a table of six college girls came in and four ordered his new chicken dish. When they finished eating, they asked to see the chef. When he entered the dining room, the girls stood up and thanked him with enthusiastic applause.

Like so many, Chef Josh started cooking at a young age. He and his younger brother would help their mother in the kitchen; cooking and baking. Though he went to culinary school at CIA in NY and then studied in Italy for two years, the home cook is what really influenced his style of cooking. “When you cook at home, you don’t have a large fridge/freezer,” says Chef Josh. “You have limited space to store food and cook on. Plus, making smaller quantities keeps the food fresher and tasting better. I guess that’s why I feel comfortable working in smaller kitchens. I also try to buy local; including at the farmer’s market every week in the European Village.”

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Customers love Chef Josh for his creativity and passion, which shows in every dish he plans at La Piazza Café. When compared with other known chefs like Todd English, Emeril, or even Chef Anthony Ambrose, he says what makes him different is not only the style of cuisine, but one other key ingredient. "I am a mix of all three chefs," says Chef Josh. "Yet, I admit I'm human. I know I screw up occasionally and when I do, I personally apologize to my customer. Also, I still try to appeal to all classes of society. The others mentioned only appeal to middle-upper class."

When asked why culinary, he'll tell you it chose him. "It just comes natural," says Chef Josh. "My boss thinks I read cookbooks all day. But, I can

This November, Chef Josh will celebrate 11 years at La Piazza.



Chef Josh's lobster ravioli with shrimp and scallops

read a recipe and make that dish even if I have to adjust the ingredients. Show me once and I can make it. I make fresh mozzarella, homemade gnocchi and ravioli at the restaurant. In Italy, I only made some of the fillings, never the dough."

In closing, Chef Josh says if you've never been to La Piazza, give them a try. They just won two awards: **2017 Flagler County's Best Italian Restaurant and Best Banquet Facility**. It's based on the chef's delectable cooking style and the Lass Family's attention to detail.

"Whether you join us for dinner, a wine tasting or reserve our banquet room for your special celebration," says Chef Josh, "we guarantee you will be back for more. Be sure to tell the wait staff you read about us."

La Piazza Café

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