

Ari's Little Italy: A family tradition

BY ROB ROEDEL

Ari Maksuti grew up in Italy and spent quite a bit of time with his mother, aunt and grandmother in the kitchen learning to cook. Today, customers at Ari's Little Italy in Glenwood are the benefactors of the lessons as they enjoy his wonderful culinary offerings.

Maksuti moved to the United States from Italy in 1999 and operated restaurants in Texas before opening his Glenwood establishment in March 2006. His decision to move to Arkansas was

the result of a web-based search of places to live. He fell in love with the natural beauty of Arkansas and was particularly attracted to the Hot



Ari Maksuti delivers a tasty authentic Italian pizza.

Springs area. When he was visiting the area, he noticed that there was a great location for a restaurant in Glenwood. Eight years later, residents from across the state flock to the cozy establishment to sample the authentic Italian fare.

"We have customers from around Arkansas visit and often return with friends," he said. "It makes me feel good when I see people enjoying my food. I love to cook the recipes that I learned while growing up cooking with my mom, aunt and grandmother."

During the visit to Ari's, it was obvious that he absolutely loves what he does as he was greeting customers, delivering plates of food and preparing orders. The pride he takes in his food and the restaurant showed on his face as he was always smiling.

Ari's food parade started with a house salad featuring a tomato vinaigrette house dressing. The dressing had a sweet, tangy flavor. A plate of garlic bread that oozed with fresh goodness arrived. This warm and fluffy homemade offering is prepared in a ring that is swimming in mouthwatering butter and garlic.

The appetizer special on the day of my visit was the stuffed mushrooms.

These beauties were stuffed with crab meat and a rich, white melted cheese. The mushrooms were topped with a homemade white sauce, a perfect



The chicken parmesan and pasta are topped with a wonderful homemade marinara sauce.

coating for the hors d'oeuvre.

Next, Ari delivered "Musless di Mare." The offering included mussels in white wine and a spicy homemade marinara sauce. The mussels had excellent flavor and were accentuated by a homemade marinara sauce. "I make the sauce with fresh tomatoes to give it a good fresh flavor," Ari said.

Ari's also offers an impressive array of pizzas, including a margherita pie. This traditional pizza had just the right amount of sauce with fresh sliced tomatoes arranged on a crust that was light, airy and the envy of any pizza chef. This was a real Italian pizza and delivered a taste that indicated it was homemade and absolutely delicious. I noticed a few fellow diners enjoying huge calzones. I plan to give one of those a try next time.

His pasta dishes feature a marinara sauce and pasta that just belong together. If they could sing, it would be like Sonny and Cher singing, "I've Got You Babe."

The chicken parmesan

The "Musless di Mare" is a must try for seafood lovers.



the eating essentials

ARI'S LITTLE ITALY

180 Arkansas 70 East, No. 13
Glenwood
870-356-4587

Hours of Operation

Sunday - Thursday: 11 a.m. - 9 p.m.
Friday - Saturday: 11 a.m. - 10 p.m.



features a breaded chicken breast with mozzarella cheese in a zesty sauce with a side of pasta. The chicken is fork tender and had great texture. The eggplant parmesan includes breaded fresh eggplant stuffed with ricotta cheese and spinach in a tomato sauce with a nice side of pasta. Both options were excellent.

The final entrée was chicken florentine. This work of art should be displayed at the finest museums around the globe. The culinary demonstration of craftsmanship was created with a large chicken breast sautéed with fresh spinach and mushrooms in a creamy white sauce. It is visually appealing and the wonderful flavor practically floats off the plate!

When combined and prepared just right, the simplest

ingredients can yield a fantastic creation.



Ari's ice cream ball dessert pleases all ages.

With this in mind, Ari created a dessert he calls the ice cream ball. This signature dessert consists of a hard-frozen ball of sweet vanilla ice cream coated in walnuts, dipped in caramel sauce, and then half-dipped in chocolate sauce with powdered sugar dusted on top.

"It is simple, but very, very good," Ari said. "Everyone from children to grandparents loves it." I agree. Other desserts include crème brûlée, cannoli, tiramisu and others that are sure to please.

"We have a simple restaurant, but we serve great food," he said. "It is authentic food and our employees make all feel welcome." ▀

Dining recommendations? Contact Rob Roedel at rroedel@aecc.com

Foundation Problems???

Call Us Today For a Free Estimate!

RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL

SLAB REPAIR

- ❖ DuraSteel Piers
- ❖ Pilings
- ❖ Mud Pumping
- ❖ Raising & Leveling
- ❖ Brick Repairs

PIER & BEAM

- ❖ Sills Replaced
- ❖ Joist Replaced
- ❖ Rotten Floors Replaced
- ❖ Raising & Leveling
- ❖ Termite Damage Repair

Locally Owned & Operated



HOME SERVICES, INC.

Call: 870-798-3807 • Toll Free: 1-877-256-7900

HOME SERVICES, INC. SAVES YOU MONEY!

GROW MOREL MUSHROOMS



CREATE A PERENNIAL MOREL GARDEN IN YOUR OWN BACK YARD
We provide the spawn and easy to use instructions for preparing an outdoor **Morel Habitat**. You just sow the seed, maintain the **Morel Habitat**, and pick & enjoy fresh Morel Mushrooms.
\$32.95 + \$7.95 S/H
ORDER (800) 789-9121

GOURMET MUSHROOMS
P. O. BOX 515 NC4 * GRATON, CA 95444
www.gmushrooms.org

crossword answers

for puzzle on page 38

S	E	V	O		E	L	V		T	V		T	V	T	
W	E	R	D		R	E	G		I	N		N	V	A	I
A	V	N		I	M	O	V		A	N		I	R	H	
Y	C	R		A	R	S		T	N	V		S	V	P	
			N		K	E	R		I	S		L	U	I	
O		V	D		O	T	E		O	R		E		M	
M		I	N		D	E	V		A			L	A	R	
E		O	H		A	T	V		M	E		T	E	R	
R		L	E		S	T	S		B	U		V	L	T	
I		T	E		N	G	I		S	V		S	N	A	
				O	I	C	S		S	D		O	H		
S	N	E	H		P	E	T		S		N	O	S	T	
M		V	D		E	K	V		I	U		R	A	L	
E		R	U		V	H	V		M	O		V	B	R	
B		R	A		G	L	C		M	D		M	A	M	

WORLD'S LARGEST WALK-IN BATH STORE



Wholesale prices
Starting at \$2,399

- 18 walk-in baths on display
- Hundreds in stock
- 5 brands & over 70 models
- 60 years in business
- Free shipping

Luter's Supply

Tylertown, MS
www.LuterSupply.com

1-800-264-4902