



august 21, 2009

the buzz

"Trattoria Cinque"

Giving Tribeca a new reason to mangia is Trattoria Cinque, a true Italian eatery with a vintage 1960's vibe. Bringing together this classic feel with hints of present day trends, are talents of Italian born Chef Mirco Grassini, with a roster of restaurants throughout Milan, Argentina and Brazil under his belt. Chef Grassini brings over a decade of experience with him, most recently from Alfredo of Rome, where he met owner and restaurateur Russell Bellanca, who together have dreamt up this restaurant as a tribute to Italian favorites.

A glance at Chef Mirco Grassini's menu would appear as if David Letterman got his hands on it. It's highlighted by a numerical approach that features the "top five" of each Italian specialty, from Five Small Plates to Five Pastas, down to Big Plates, Endings and Digestives. These top dishes include favorites such as Cannelloni Di Melanzane, organic eggplant stuffed with sheep's milk ricotta (\$16), Ravioli di Brasato, braised short rib stuffed home made pasta (\$16), and a classic Lasagna Bolognese (\$18). In the true style of this retro-inspired trattoria, a "Cesarista" will visit your table to construct a Insalata di Cesare (\$10) that can be made in the traditional style or topped with a range of unexpected toppings such as Applewood smoked bacon, prosciutto, Parmigiano shavings, pancetta or porchetta.

To keep with the "rule of fives," watch throughout the year as the menu will change, you guessed it, five times throughout, reflective of seasonal Italian produce and ingredients. Conscious of your wallet, but hardly your waistline, all of the dishes at Trattoria Cinque are priced under \$25, including plenty of very reasonable quartinos, or a third of a bottle of wine, which start at \$9.

It's easy to get lost in this Italian dream, in the grand 250-seat restaurant, with exposed brick walls, as you sink into oversized booths, dual fireplaces and painted vintage images of Italian cars and motorcycles along the walls, but there are several small nooks and crannies to get cozy in, including two private rooms that bring designer Garrett Singer's (Hill Country, Klee Brasserie) comforting touches to life.

Trattoria Cinque is located at 363 Greenwich Street between Franklin and Harrison, 212.965.0555, www.trattoriacinqueny.com. Lunch and dinner are served seven days a week, brunch and take-out delivery will begin later this fall.

—Dara Levine