

San Pietro

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San Pietro:
Preserving a Beautiful Culinary Heritage

New York, NY – Culinary trends come and go, but **Ristorante San Pietro** (www.sanpietro.net), on East 54th Street in Manhattan, has always remained faithful to the healthy, vivacious foods of Campania, in Southern Italy.

Gerardo and Antonio Bruno, proprietors of San Pietro, had a mission when they emigrated to New York City from their native Salerno in 1976: to share the light and nutritious cuisine of Campania with the American public. “At the time, northern Italian cuisine was the rage at top Italian restaurants in the city,” says Gerardo. “We were shocked at the heavy sauces, the cheese smothering every dish, all the breading on delicate meats and poultry. We wanted to show Americans how light, yet satisfying, genuine southern Italian cuisine was. Our cooking tradition is based on the ancient, renowned Salerno School of Medicine, which advocated a healthy diet, exercise and a low-stress lifestyle.”

The *fratelli* Bruno, or Bruno brothers, came to the States with two other brothers, Cosimo and Giuseppe, in 1976, and trained at some of New York’s most celebrated restaurants. Then, in 1984, they opened their first restaurant, **Sistina**, located on Second Avenue and 81st Street. Sistina became an overnight success, hosting such international luminaries as **Marcello Mastroianni** and **Vladimir Horowitz**. So impressed was Horowitz, in fact, that he had Sistina’s cuisine flown to Russia when he returned to perform there.

In 1992, Gerardo and Antonio took the next step and launched a second, more ambitious restaurant in the heart of corporate Manhattan: **San Pietro**.

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Direct From the Source

Today, the Bruno brothers import 85 percent of their ingredients from Campania, Sardinia, Sicilia and other provinces of the south. They collect time-honored recipes from the family – their father was Executive Chef of the cruise ship the *Michelangelo* for many years, and continuously research historic and culinary books to shape San Pietro's menu. Executive Chef Antonio claims that "Alitalia Airlines has virtually become my marketing agent. The best produce in Italy comes from the south because of the rich, volcanic ash soil, and we fly that in weekly. We import our own hydroponically grown cherry tomatoes, from our family's estate in Salerno, as well as the purest extra virgin olive oil in the world, with 0% acidity. We get capers from Lipari and other seasonal items, such as truffles and porcini, from Alba." Other exquisite delicacies that are carefully selected by Chef Antonio are the prized mozzarella di bufalo, made from water buffalo's milk; and fresh anchovies from the Ischia Coast.

Table of Antiquity

San Pietro has been the first restaurant in America to introduce many dishes of antiquity, ripped fresh from the pages of the Roman Empire. He adapts ancient recipes and techniques to contemporary dishes, such as San Pietro's signature dish, *Branzino al sale*, which is sea bass baked in a crust of sea salt with herbs. This centuries-old technique involves sea salt used as a protective coating to conserve the precious flavors and juices of the fish. Another historic dish is *Fave e cicoria dei tempi antichi*, with puréed fava beans and chicory, sautéed with garlic; and the Roman *Colatura di Alici*, using the juice of anchovies that has been fermented in a crock for an entire year, and mixing it with pasta.

San Pietro's menu also focuses on a rich array of fish and seafood, pulled fresh from the Mediterranean's dazzling seas: *scarfano*, John Dory fish, *bottarga* and baby octopus. Then, of course, there are San Pietro's delectable pastas and risottos, including *Orecchiette*, and *Scialatielli*, all featuring the finest vegetables of the season – zucchini

flowers, radicchio, endive, fresh arugula and basil, and cherry tomatoes.

San Pietro's desserts are made fresh daily, and include luscious mousses, sorbets, pastiera -- a Neopolitan dessert similar to porridge -- and tiramisu.

Award-winning Wines

San Pietro is renowned worldwide for its comprehensive southern Italian wine list, focusing on single vineyard and unusual wines. That is because the Brunos' father, Gaetano, visits vineyards throughout Italy and makes exclusive arrangements with limited-production vineyards. Cosimo Bruno, San Pietro's wine director, has selected such precious labels as Feudi di San Gregorio (Fiano) 2002, St.Michael-Eppan (Pinot Grigio) 2002, Sonoma-Cutrer-Russian River 2002, all white; and Castello Di Fonterutoli (Badiola) 2001, Poggio a Poppi (Calamita) 2001, Villa Matilde (Falerno Rosso) 2001; and Fazio Torre Dei Venti (Nero D`Auola) 2001, all reds. The Italian government has honored San Pietro with the "Best Italian Wine Menu" award worldwide; and WINE SPECTATOR has given the restaurant the "Award of Excellence" for several years in a row.

On the Terrace at San Pietro; Catering

San Pietro has the largest terrace of an upscale, midtown Manhattan restaurant, with seating for 55+. The restaurant is also the ultimate environment for elegant gatherings, whether a private party, corporate celebrations, film openings or spirited fund-raising events. San Pietro also provides off-premises catering for corporate executives and residential dinners, and has hosted high-profile events for the Mayor of the City of New York at Gracie Mansion, the Italian Consulate and other dignitaries and celebrities.

Anyone who is fortunate to dine at San Pietro understands immediately why the *fratelli* Bruno have chosen a logo that represents the keys to heaven.

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