

Uva Wine Bar & Restaurant



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Massimo Lusardi

and his cousin Patty Lusardi.



ITALIAN RUSTIC-CHIC FOR WINE AND FOOD LOVERS ALIKE, UVA IS A TREASURE TROVE IN A NEIGHBORHOOD THAT NEEDS IT

BY PATRICIA ORIOLIS

In a city where Italian restaurants of all varieties have become as common as yellow cabs, Uva is a standout, distinguishing itself by importing the lusty, simple, and sometimes uncommon pleasures of the Italian country kitchen that are too often lost in translation. "We couldn't find better words to introduce this chic yet countrified wine bar, so we had to borrow them from the owners of Uva themselves: brothers Mauro and Luigi Lusardi, and their children Massimo and Patrizia. The Upper East Side was in need of a locale like Uva, a wine bar and restaurant with a distinctive personality and creative cuisine to match. Sister to Lusardi's

restaurant, Uva is pretty much whatever you want it to be. It is a joint alive with the spirit of Italy that can quickly make you feel at home.

"This is the kind of place you expect to find in the Village or in Soho, not in this area. But that was our point, we wanted to open something different and that wouldn't compete with our other restaurants." Mr. Luigi explains. (In addition to Lusardi's the family owns Due, and Luke's). This warm-hued, rustic yet elegant Italian wine bar and restaurant is the place for a drink with friends after work or a fun night out, for meeting a blind date or for a romantic spot to try an array of courses while sampling



Anello di Capesante

• Speck, Sea scallops wrapped in smoked prosciutto with sautéed spinach and white wine sauce.



some of the best wines. "The wine list features 40 wines by the glass and about 250 bottles," Massimo explains, "we are the only restaurant in town to serve *Vino in Tazza*, wine in a bowl." In the old tradition of Northern Italy, especially around Piacenza Parma, and Mantua, it was common to drink local reds out of small white bowls. Wines like the Bonarda or the bubbly Lambrusco would leave dark red rings when swirled around the white bowls, a good sign of the

wine's density and quality. "We originally come from Borgotaro, in the province of Parma, and this is part of our background, of a past we do not want to depart from. When working on the wine list we visited several trattorias to talk to the locals, especially the elders, and find out all we could about this ancient custom," Mr. Mauro explains. "People leap through the wine list and they always stop at the wine in a bowl page, always curious to find out what it is."

The cellar

is intimately lit by candles and is ideal for a bit of privacy and a private party.



tradition," he admits, "I combine regional and rustic cuisine with modern accents." Resist the traditional urge to order only tiny-bite appetizers of cheeses and meats, and enjoy a full menu of Italian entrees. Food is served till the wee hours, as the kitchen closes at 2 a.m. "Many of our customers are people in the restaurant business that come for a meal and some good wine after a long night at work," Massimo reveals. In addition to a cozy dining room, a rear patio, framed by brick and flower boxes, invites patrons to sit at small green tables all year long (during the colder months heaters are placed around the tables). The *cantina*, the cellar, is intimately lit by candles and is ideal for a bit of privacy and a private party. Uva is a favorite of locals but it's good to know that people are coming from other neighborhoods just to go there. It simply is the ideal place for a relaxed drink, a full meal, or late-night snack.

Uva • 1486 Second Avenue, east 77th Street
www.uvawinebarnewyork.com



The Upper

Each Side was in need of a locale like Uva, a wine bar and restaurant with a distinctive personality and creative cuisine to match.

Massimo continues, "They follow all the instructions in order to make it as authentic as possible." Along with the leather-bound wine list comes an equally extensive food menu, abounding with mouth watering snacks and appetizers as *chiosolino* – Emilian style *focaccia* served with a Robiola-and-truffle spread or with *stracchino* cheese and *coppa*, or *carta da musica*, paper-thin flatbread topped with extra virgin olive oil and parmigiano cheese, or platters of cheeses and cold cuts: intriguing salads such as red beets, fava beans and goat cheese served with mache in a cheese basket, and seriously rich entrees such as ricotta gnocchi smothered in creamy truffle-and-chive sauce, prepared by chef Claudio Meneghini. "My cooking is diverse in the Northern Italian

Carta

da Musica Conditia, seasoned Sardinian flatbread, and Antipasto Misto, a selection of Italian cold cuts to be enjoyed with wine.

