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Scallion Bistro

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Chef David Bollman

THE STORY

Scallion Bistro mixes the classic bistro feel with an upper-echelon bar setting. Owner Sandra Thayer and Chef David Bollman opened the restaurant in 2007 with the idea of offering guests the chance to have big city cuisines served with small-town hospitality. Located near the shores of Chautauqua Lake,

the restaurant is comfortable and classy without coming off as pretentious. Local art hangs on the walls, and the lake air provides a cool surrounding. You could get a meal on the run here, but after spending just a few minutes in their open, idyllic setting, you will be tempted to sit down.

CULINARY VIEWPOINT

Chef David Bollman assures that since he's lived in this region his whole life, he knows how far he can push the envelope with his cuisine. His menu is "contemporary American with Mediterranean and Italian overtones," which is well represented when you see his takes on dishes like the Veal San Remo, Chicken Toscana, and Pasta Carbonara. But the atmosphere created

by nearby Chautauqua Lake immediately calls seafood to mind when you browse the menu, and the feeling must be mutual as the Bar Harbor is their most popular dish, which features pan-seared sea scallops served over lobster risotto with a lime-scalloped vinaigrette, and is the perfect meal to satisfy an appetite without being overly filling.



An Interview with Saverio Colao from Colao's Ristorante

» What was the inspiration behind your menu?

I was born in Italy and grew up in an Italian household. I wanted to share with the broader public what we had to eat as kids. There is very little distinction between the food you eat at my restaurant and the food we ate at my parents' house when I was growing up. I think the authenticity of the food speaks for itself.

» What is authentic Italian food?

All the ingredients are fresh, and the food is made to order. We have pasta dishes that incorporate seafood, and we have an extensive selection of fresh veal dishes. We are not talking about frozen patties. We use pounded cutlets. We buy veal loins, which is almost unheard of. But then we have the standards like Chicken Parmesan or Ravioli to incorporate some of the classics with the more upscale meals.

» Do you give special consideration to food and wine pairing?

We have about 60 bottles on our wine list. We do a little bit of wine pairing, but we don't get too into it. We know enough about wine to explain the nuances of a wine, and we could pair it very easily.



An Interview with Julio Reyes from Latino's

» What separates your cuisine from other Mexican restaurants?

Mine is traditional homemade Mexican cuisine. It is not Tex-Mex or Americanized Mexican. It has to be fresh, cooked from scratch, and based on corn and chilies. We are passionate about good quality food made from scratch and I want to preserve that cultural integrity.

» What is something on your menu that you can't find anywhere around here?

The mole [sauce]. Mole is traditional in Mexico. It is a chocolate base with dried chilies. I doubt that anyone else around here will ever serve mole. I go to extreme measures for people looking for a culinary and cultural experience. If they want Americanized Mexican they can go to the chains.

» How does the restaurant's atmosphere reflect your heritage?

It is Mexican decorations but not low-end. We have specially made pieces that reflect our cultural heritage. We have handmade etchings and paintings in oil or watercolors.



I want people to step in the building and think "I am not in Erie," and stay for a couple hours to enjoy good food and culture.



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"We just wanted to comment about the Scallion Bistro in Lakewood, NY. The ambiance is warm and comfortable; the staff friendly and attentive and they make you feel so welcome and appreciated. It is a first-class dining experience. The food is always excellent and far superior to anything else around. We have never had an average meal at Scallion Bistro... The Thayer family and Chef Bollman have a genuine treasure in Lakewood and we are glad they are here."
— Eric & Jennifer Hern - Lakewood, NY.

WINTER HOURS:
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Friday-Saturday, 5-10 p.m.

SUMMER HOURS:
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Friday-Saturday, 5-10 p.m.
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Fine Dining with children

Pittsburgh's Kaya makes it possible

Until recently, I had only a couple of rules about food and my kids. They had to eat three times a day and they were not allowed inside of a restaurant that did not have a playland and loads of other kids screaming their heads off. Prior to turning five and six, my children were, well, loud. They were also extremely bouncy and prone to temper tantrums over silly things like “No you may not eat the sugar packs.” We did attempt to take them to a few nicer restaurants, including an oyster bar (not a big hit), but after one of my sons threw his Sippy Cup at another table, we decided it would be best not to inflict the little devils on paying customers. But this past year, we began to travel a great deal with our boys, and I decided that because they could manage a car trip of six hours, they could manage to behave themselves in a decent restaurant. I could eat something besides apple dippers and grilled chicken salad while introducing their palettes to something other than Mac & Cheese and chicken nuggets. We started at a wonderful restaurant in Pittsburgh's Strip District, Kaya.

You deserve a night out and you can't always stay at home and when you bring [your children] out we want you to have a good experience.

— Monika Derwien-Banks, General Manager Kaya

Kaya, located on the corner of Smallman Street, is kid friendly without being “kiddie.” With a bright mix of orange, purple, and yellow and funky bar stools that look like drums, the décor is hip and urban enough to make the adults feel like adults, but it is not so intimidating that kids will immediately begin to squirm. You won't find balloons (Thank God! Lost into the sky after dinner = meltdown.), but you will find a great staff who welcome children and are sensitive to the needs of parents. Example: We were seated in the back of the restaurant, still part of the action but discreetly away from the bar and any guests who might not dig children as much as we do. We enjoyed a real cocktail, and the kids had “kiddie” cocktails cleverly served in plastic containers with holes for the straws. The menu, which is a happy mix of Caribbean and South American flavors, is sophisticated enough not to bore the adults but not so spicy that our children's taste buds were overwhelmed. Kaya's signature “Tropa” (little tapas dishes) lends itself perfectly to families. We ordered several tapas and shared. The children had the opportunity to try something new without the misery of having to finish it if they didn't like it. And nothing went to waste, because what they didn't eat, Daddy and Mommy happily did. We loved the Sweet & Spicy Baby Back Ribs, the Tuna Poke, and the Kaya Chips with Mango-Tomatillo Salsa. Best part? Prices were very family friendly, leaving enough in our wallets for a trip to the zoo the next day.

— Réna Tran

Kaya is located at 2000 Smallman Street in Pittsburgh's Strip District. Reservations are recommended. For more information call (412) 261-6565 or visit www.bigburrito.com.

Three Birds

18515 Detroit Ave • Lakewood, Ohio 44107 • (216) 221-3500
www.3birdsrestaurant.com



THE STORY

On the edge of the Rocky River in Lakewood, Ohio, rests a truly different experience in fine dining. Just looking at the exterior of Three Birds Restaurant you know you are not in your typical high-end establishment. With beautiful landscaping and gardening and a quaint exterior set in the middle of owner James Bell's family legacy, the Bonne Bell cosmetics company buildings, the stuffiness commonly associated with fine-dining establishments has been removed

even before you walk through Three Birds doors. Inside, guests are treated to a casual, laid-back atmosphere with a modern industrial feel, filled with bright warm reds and rich blacks in an enormous open space. But Three Birds real claim to fame is their patio, which fills fast on summer evenings with guests dedicating their night to enjoying the cool night air while sipping one of the restaurant's ten famous varieties of Mojitos.

CULINARY VIEWPOINT

Executive Chef Rachel Spieth's menu touts Three Birds' motto of modern American food with imagination. Spieth borrows traditions from a world of influences, including Asian, Italian, and French cuisines, pairing the different styles with fresh seasonal ingredients. Seafood is the restaurant's most popular seller, with four to five fresh fish fillets on the menu

at all times, but Spieth considers herself to be a meat person at heart, and it shows in several of her creations. A roasted duck foie gras, served with orange-rhubarb compote and fresh citrus cornbread and a balsamic-marinated grilled hangar steak are among her personal favorites. The menu changes seasonally to best play off the region's four distinct climates.



An Interview with Bertrand Artigues from Bertrand's French Bistro

» How do you apply French cuisine to an American culture?

The thing that I want people to understand is it is American with French influences. We have a lot of foods that are out of the ordinary. We have lamb, venison, sometimes wild boar, and fresh seafood. Our duck is getting really popular lately.

» What aspect of American dining was hard for you to become accustomed to?

The way you eat is different. In France, the salad and cheese are eaten at the end of the meal as a palette cleanser. We serve those here at the beginning. There's a lot of prefix to a menu in France. You have choices between two or three appetizers, two or three entrées. Here the choices are more à la carte.

» What were some of the trials you encountered in bringing a French restaurant to Erie?

People in Erie think French is expensive and you have to be dressed up. That's why I call the restaurant a bistro. It has nice colors and nice pictures on the walls. We try to make it look European. When you open the door, you are back in France. It is France in Erie.



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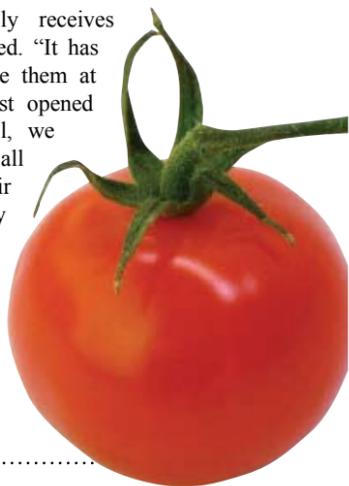


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Urban Farming

A new movement has been rising in larger metropolitan areas like Philadelphia, Detroit, and Atlanta, and if Lucas McConnell has his way, it will soon be in Erie. Urban farming, also referred to as Small Plot Intensive Agriculture Farming, or SPIN Farming, is a new action many communities are taking to use land in downtown environments that is otherwise underused as sites for small farms and gardens. McConnell sees the potential it has for our community and has already mapped out certain sites along Erie's east side. But McConnell is not seeking to make a career as an urban farmer; he would rather offer urban farming opportunities to organizations like Lake Erie Allegheny Earth Force for fundraising or to refugees for full-time jobs. "When Philadelphia started the projects, a farmer raised \$35,000 worth of produce on one sub-acre of land," says McConnell. "Others are raising \$50,000 or more on an acre. Urban farming can provide a full-time job for someone to manage a single lot. It is good work, with a great profit margin to be had. The markets exist in this community, there's just no one filling that need."

Teresa Hoerres has already seen the noneconomic benefits of such a project in Erie. Hoerres is a representative for the Americorps VISTA for the International Institute, which already has a one-acre garden for refugees along East 26th and Ash Streets. "A lot of our clients have farming backgrounds, so we built a community garden to utilize their skills and traditions from their native countries," says Hoerres. Each individual or family receives an 8' x 4' garden bed. "It has been amazing to see them at work. When we first opened the garden in April, we had families from all over the world in their traditional garb. They feel so burdened when they first get here. It was great to see them be able to give something back to their new community."



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FARM FRESH: WHAT IS THE FARM-TO-TABLE MOVEMENT?

Farm-to-table are the latest buzz words to listen for, whether it is in a restaurant or a market. It seems everyone is talking farm-to-table. But what do those three words really mean?

Farm-to-table is all about freshness, flavor, and nutrition – everything that comes from fresh produce and nonenhanced foods straight from the farm. The movement focuses on quality rather than quantity. Farmers may not be able to sell their product to mass numbers of people, but the food they do sell has a fresh, inimitable flavor.

Because of that, more people are farming fresh food to sell locally, cutting back on the size of the farm, but increasing attention to the excellence of the product. Restaurants and chefs have certainly led the demand, buying their ingredients directly from local farmers, taking advantage of growing seasons, and featuring seasonal items on their menus.

And consumers are quickly catching on. The need to go green has only spurred the farm-to-table movement. Buying produce directly from farmers at markets and roadside stands cuts out the cost of shipping, packaging, and additives. Not only does the fresh produce taste fantastic it also stimulates the local economy by putting the profit in the pocket of the regional farmer.

It is not just the flavorful wine made with local grapes, and beef and chicken raised on all natural feed, it is the refreshing taste of locally grown products, the sweetness of the fruit, and the brightness of the vegetables that have made the farm-to-table movement so popular.



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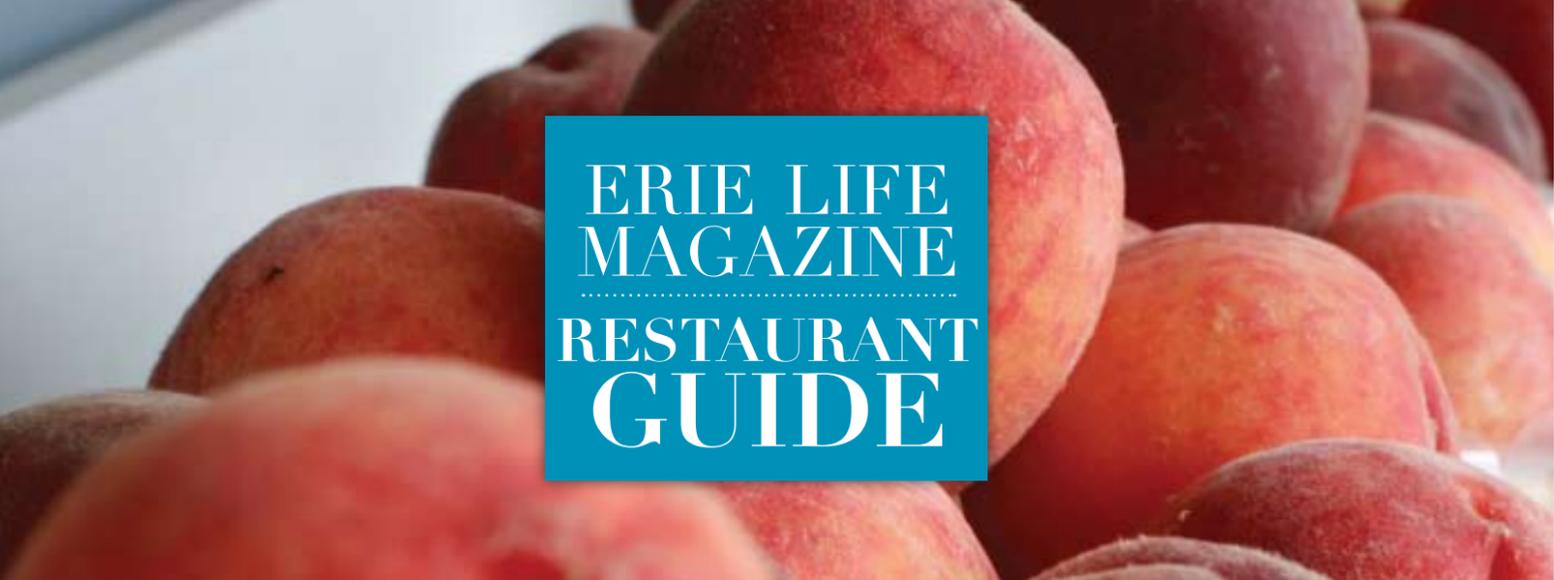
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