

La Perla Restaurant Pizzeria: a taste of the sea by the Vicentine Alps

Located in the town of Schio, for a year and a half La Perla has celebrated Mediterranean food after being restored to its former splendour thanks to the vision of owner Luigi Pozzacchio and the experience of chef Giuseppe Stambè



In a year and a half, after Luigi Pozzacchio took over from the previous owners, La Perla in Schio has become a mecca for lovers of seafood and Mediterranean cuisine, despite its location at the foot of the Vicentine Alps. The restaurant has managed to build on its 20 years of career by focusing on the quality of the produce and of the atmosphere: here the friendly staff works in an informal setting and all palates are satisfied.

It was the pleasure of seeing diners leave with a smile that motivated Pozzacchio to embrace and win a new challenge in the restaurant industry. A lover of fine dining, and especially seafood, Pozzacchio bought La Perla about a year and a half ago with the intention of restoring it to its old splendour and making it a popular destination not only for Vicenza, but for the whole Veneto region. Not an easy task, considering that the restaurant seats 180 and was in need of a major revamp. But it was a success. Pozzacchio earned the trust of his customers and now attracts flocks of lovers of Mediterranean cuisine from seaside towns like Chioggia and Sottomarina (province of Venice). The generous portions even come at affordable prices: "It's a fantastic feeling when guests shake my hand and say that they'll be back soon," says Pozzacchio.

Pozzacchio chose three targets: great produce, a traditional, homely feel, and a skilled chef at the helm of the kitchen. He found Giuseppe Stambè, native of Calabria and an expert in seafood. La Perla disproves the commonplace that you can only eat fresh fish by the sea. Every morning, the freshest seafood comes in directly from Chioggia, and on weekends diners can choose their own freshly-caught fish from a display. Not only the seafood, but all produce used at La Perla is of the finest quality, such as Gragnano pasta (PGI) or the flour used in the pizza dough. "The colours and flavours of each dish respect Mediterranean cuisine: genuine, simple, no-frills," says Pozzacchio.

To carry on the legacy of La Perla, the new owner chose to maintain the restaurant's homely atmosphere. The decor has remained simple, comfortable and welcoming, and La Perla kept on serving excellent alternatives to fish, such as pizza and meat. "We want to make sure every customer that chooses us has the best possible dining experience," says Pozzacchio. "Seafood lovers may come together with friends or relatives who prefer pizza or meat, and they too should walk away happy. Actually, our pizza is one of the best in the area." And the atmosphere is so welcoming and informal that diners feel free to ask for extra bread to mop up the chef's famous shellfish sauce. "It is simply impossible to let that sauce sit on the plate, but the portions are so generous that it can be hard to finish them. It's so nice to see when diners like our food so much that they wipe the dish clean."

The ability of chef Stambè is of key importance for the restaurant's success. His dishes not only celebrate the fine produce: they also stand out for their inventiveness. For instance, Stambè created the hugely popular 'padella', a dish of clams, mussels, scallops and scampi served with toasted bread.