

February 13, 2006



OSTERIA DANTE!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RED BANK: The cozy little Broad Street restaurant known as Osteria Dante, 91 Broad Street, Red Bank, Monmouth County, New Jersey has been sold as reported by **Richard R. Santore of Bielat Santore and Company, Allenhurst, New Jersey**. Restaurateurs looking to open new restaurants in Red Bank must purchase existing restaurants in order to do so. Finding a vacant “store front” location and opening anew is currently not permitted under the Borough’s zoning ordinance.

So, that’s exactly what new owner Michael Barocas did. Together with executive chef, Joseph Albergo, Mr. Barocas will continue to advance the trendy Italian dining concept known as Osteria Dante. The original restaurant was opened a few years ago by transplanted Greenwich Village restaurateur Mike Bitici. After completely gutting and renovating a former pizzeria, Bitici opened Osteria Dante as an elegant but causal eatery, with an open kitchen and a quaint outdoor café, all supported by a fresh Northern Italian cuisine menu.

So you may ask; why was the restaurant for sale if everything was so good? The answer is very simple. Mike Bitici felt like a fish out of water moving from New York to New Jersey. A life-long New Yorker, he decided that Manhattan is where he belonged. So he put the restaurant up for sale and shortly thereafter it was sold, to Michael Barocas.

“I liked the restaurant as soon as I saw it. It was clean, modern, tastefully decorated and small. I wasn’t looking for something real big. But more importantly, the place was doing business and I didn’t have to start from scratch. I have had my eye on Red Bank for a while, and when this opportunity came my way, I decided to jump on it,” states the new proprietor.

Under the auspicious of executive chef, Joseph Albergo, Mr. Barocas will continue to develop Osteria Dante’s reputation and appeal. Continuing with the same menu, Baracos wants the transition to be seamless to the restaurant’s customers. “We will see what works and what does not. We will make changes where needed. But if isn’t broken, we not going to try to fix it.”

The restaurant is open six days a week, Tuesday through Sunday, for both lunch and dinner.