

Living



Chef Vittorio Colacitti



# the son



PHOTOGRAPHY, JULIE HARTLIS



# also rises

Globally minded and brazenly eclectic, The Good Son has won over Toronto diners – and mama **By Nadine Anglin**

**A**S A COMPETITOR on last year's *Top Chef Canada*, chef Vittorio Colacitti battled some of the country's best culinary talent. But for his second act, he took on an even bigger challenge: the opening of The Good Son, a new take on the supper club concept in Toronto's Queen West and Dovercourt area.

The eatery's name comes from Colacitti's mother who always calls him "the good son" (and yes, he's also the only son), while his culinary ambitions also have familial roots.

"I was born and raised to be a chef. My grandfather was a chef; my other grandfather was a farmer," he explains. His resume includes working in the kitchens of George, Lucien and Didier and spending formative years in Italy and on the West Coast. This global education informs this chef's self-described Toronto cuisine.

"I don't want to limit myself. I really enjoy Asian flavours. There will be Thai and a little bit of Japanese. In terms of flavour profile, I really like spice in most of my food. I like heat and a good amount of acidity. There's never going to be bland food."

True to his word, his menu includes a juicy, perfectly seasoned gourmet burger served with addictive fries, plump jerk shrimp, soy maple chicken and sarsaparilla side ribs.

But the real attraction? The pizzas cooked in an authentic wood-fire oven. "It's a real science to do pizza very well. We're using a rare

technique, a three-day cold fermentation," he says. Somewhere between a traditional Neapolitan- and a Roman-style pie, the pizzas are topped with local fior di latte cheese and Quebec buffalo mozzarella.

The decor is as eclectic as the menu – button-tucked banquettes, a feature wall of clocks and bookshelves

stocked with novels, photos and thrift-store tchotchkes speak to the diverse neighbourhood.

And when diners are ready to really get their evening started, Colacitti hopes they simply hop upstairs to his speakeasy, Wayward, where they can lounge on large sofas, sip bourbon and cognac cocktails and listen to music until 2 a.m. on Friday and Saturdays.

This is all fine and dandy, but there's a lingering question most diners familiar with this area's food scene would ask: isn't this niche already filled by The Drake Hotel a few blocks down the street and its more low-key counterpart, The Gladstone Hotel, a few blocks farther still?

Well, you know what they say: a little competition never hurt anyone. ☐



## WILD MUSHROOM TAGLIATELLE

From Vittorio Colacitti, chef-owner of The Good Son

This dough is versatile enough for making stuffed pasta such as ravioli. Here, we are using it for long pasta (tagliatelle is like a wide flat linguine). The semolina makes the dough more toothsome than a

strictly all-purpose flour recipe. The key to making great pasta dough is to knead it thoroughly. This is best achieved with a slow mixing speed to allow the liquid to incorporate evenly into the flour mixture. I prefer oyster mushrooms or most wild mushrooms such as chanterelles. If unavailable, portobellos with the gills ▶

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removed work well. When selecting mushrooms, make sure they are firm and not moist.

**Makes 6 servings**

### Pasta Dough

900 g all-purpose flour  
200 g semolina flour  
8 eggs  
12 egg yolks  
20 ml olive oil

### Mushrooms

1 kg mushrooms (for about 6 servings of pasta)  
Olive oil  
2 sprigs thyme  
Garlic

### Mushroom Stock

Mushroom stems  
2 onions, chopped  
4 sprigs thyme  
1 fresh bay leaf

### Pasta Dough

In electric mixer fitted with dough hook attachment, combine flours (dough can be kneaded by hand, using the well technique but is best suited for an electric mixer process). Mix on low speed. Whisk together eggs and yolks; slowly add to bowl. Once incorporated, add olive oil around edge of bowl. Continue mixing on 4/10 speed until glossy. Remove dough and wrap with plastic wrap. Let rest for at least 30 minutes.

### Mushrooms

Trim mushrooms, saving stems for stock. In skillet, without crowding, sauté mushrooms in olive oil, thyme and bashed garlic. Cook until slightly caramelized and softened. Remove from pan.

### Mushroom Stock

In pot of cold water, place mushroom stems, onions, thyme and bay leaf (add enough water to come



about 2 inches above ingredients). Bring to a simmer and simmer for 45 minutes. Remove from heat and let steep for 1 hour. Strain.

### To finish

Sea salt  
2 tbsp olive oil  
Half an onion, diced  
2 tbsp dry white wine  
Chopped chives  
Chopped parsley  
Grated Grana Padano  
Cracked black pepper

In large pot of water, add sea salt (water should taste like ocean water). Bring to boil.

In skillet, heat oil over medium heat; cook onion until softened. Add wine, mushrooms and mushroom stock.

Use a pasta roller to make noodles. Drop noodles into boiling water for 1 minute or less (fresh pasta cooks very quickly), strain and place in sauté pan with mushrooms and stock. Simmer gently, constantly tossing, until pasta is tender. Add a knob of unsalted butter or more olive oil. There should still be liquid in the pan but it should not be soupy.

Plate and garnish with chives, parsley, Grana Padano cheese and pepper. ☑