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## A Taste of Lake Como on the Promenade at *Locanda Del Lago*

BY AMY LYONS

Authentic cuisine from Bellagio and the lake region of Northern Italy can be found right in your own backyard. Simply head out to Santa Monica's Third Street Promenade and grab a table at Locanda Del Lago to enjoy all the flavors of the Lake Como region.

A warm and spacious spot, Lago is a best bet for out-of-town visitors or locals seeking a relaxing dining experience. The cool yellow interior and sturdy, dark wooden tables are reminiscent of a real Italian villa, and the cozy room is full of

popular chef of that region, clearly knows Italian cuisine and uses that knowledge to create an exciting menu at Lago.

In addition to Maggioni's signature dishes, there are also a slew of cost-saving solutions that can't be beat. Every night a recession relief special keeps customers happy, including the elimination of corkage fees when you bring your own wine on Monday nights, happy hour pricing all night long at the bar

on Tuesdays, and half off selected bottled wines on Wednesdays. Daily stimulus packages include a two-course lunch menu for \$15, and a three-course dinner menu for \$29. Happy Hour lasts from 4:00pm – 7:00pm, featuring half-priced appetizers, and discounted beers, wines and cocktails.

Choose Locanda Del Lago for a taste of Northern Italy right here in Southern California. Located at 231 Arizona Ave. Call (310) 451-3525.

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elegant touches. Views of the Third Street Promenade make Locanda Del Lago one of the trendiest Italian restaurants in Santa Monica. The patio is a great place to get front row glimpses of the local foot traffic.

On Saturdays, one of four Santa Monica Certified Farmers Markets sets up shop just a few steps away from Lago's front door, and the restaurant takes full advantage of the fresh produce sold there. The Burrata alla Caprese pairs the freshest farmers market tomatoes



photo by Megan Stoddy

Grilled black cod with black mussels in orange-vodka sauce over Swiss chard (bottom); and beef tenderloin stuffed with Roma tomato in red wine sauce with soft polenta and baby carrots are just two dishes on the rotating tasting menu.

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with creamy Burrata, a fresh Italian cheese made from mozzarella and cream. Farmers market produce is also worked into the artisanal cocktail menu, where refreshing libations are too tempting to resist. Try a market margarita, which includes market-fresh grapefruit, tangelo and lime; or dive into the wildly popular caprese martini made from fresh cherry tomatoes, basil, crop tomato vodka and balsamic.

After you've chosen the perfect cocktail and enjoyed an appetizer, it's time for the main course. You can't go wrong with the Ossobuco alla Milanese. Sided with a rich and satisfying saffron-Parmesan risotto, this veal shank has a tenderness that makes it slide straight off the bone. The variety on the entrée offerings is a great reason to keep coming back to sample everything from duck leg confit to salt baked Chilean sea bass. Pizzas also dot the menu, including a scrumptious pizza diavola topped with spicy salami Calabrese, oregano, mozzarella and tomato. Beef lovers might opt for a European twist on the usual burger, the Euro burger, an Italian hamburger topped with robiola cheese. Chef Roberto Maggioni, a native of Milan and



photo by Dave Siegle Photography

The interior of Locanda Del Lago has the look and feel of a warm Italian villa.