

Gennaro Nasti – the pizza maker from Naples who took Paris by storm

by Åsa Johansson on June 11, 2018 in Food and Wine

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Gennaro Nasti left Naples for Paris, where in 2016 he opened Bijou, luxury pizzas in designer decorated restaurant. To give you an idea, Bijou was voted Pizzeria of the year in 2017 by the Italian magazine Gambero Rosso. Gennaro is an expert in fermentations, and his pizza doughs are famous for being perfect. He continues to experiment and is now also making a dough with champagne (!) He is fanatic about having high quality ingredients and the restaurant's menu (the pizzas) change every month. And he deos no take-away even if you beg on your bare knees. I had a brief chat with Gennaro when he came to Florence for an evening making pizza together with Savini Tartufi who sells excellent truffles all over the world.

Can you briefly describe your two restaurants in Paris, Bijou and Popine?

Popine is a pizzeria where you can eat the classic Neapolitan pizza. At Bijou I wanted to create an environment where I can express my creativity and where I give the guests a gastronomic experience.

On your business card it says both chef and a pizza maker – which one of the two do you think is most suitable on you?

Both. Both concepts represent me. This is because my pizza is a mirror of my cuisine.



Pizza with truffles, copyright A Johansson

Describe a perfect pizza?

First, you must have good ingredients. Then a perfect fermentation and you must be very careful how you bake it.

Pizza in general has had a remarkable development in recent years. What is a modern pizza for you?

To me, a modern pizza is to take tradition a step further, to create a new idea, to have an idea is the essence of a real chef.

You change the menu monthly. Can you mention three different pizzas from three different seasons that we should not miss?

Antica:

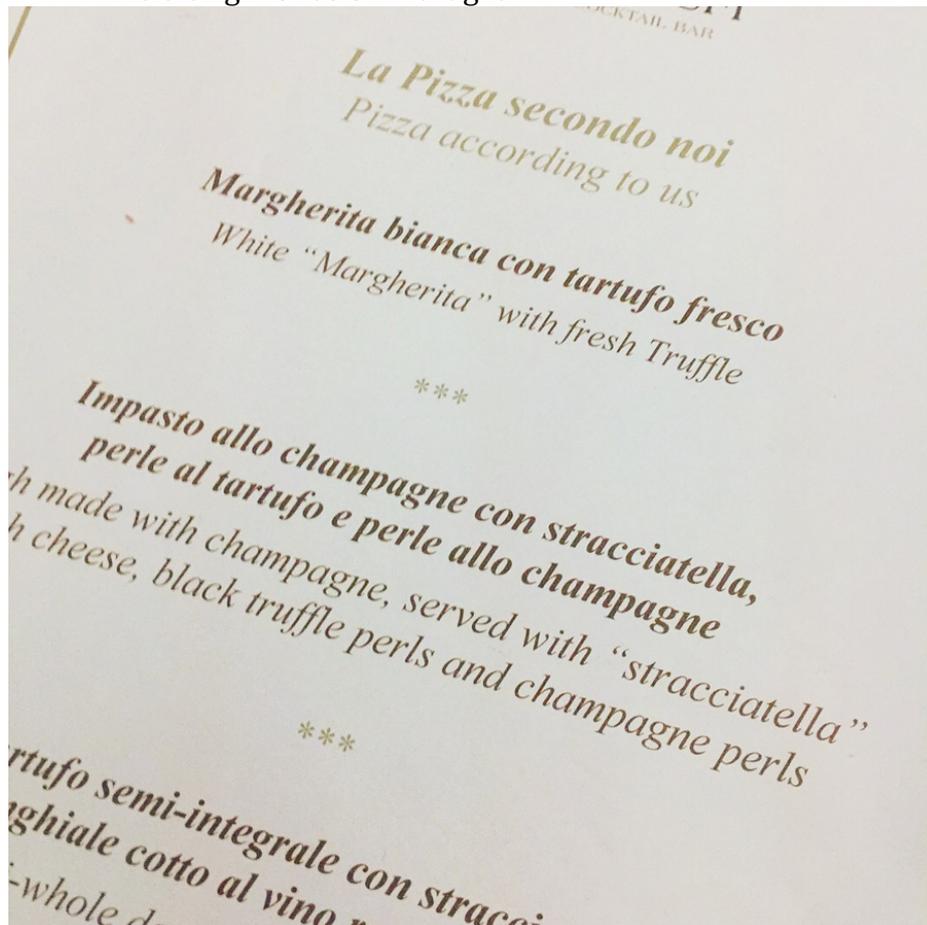
- Whole grain flour called Petra 9
- Traditional meat sauce, buffalo mozzarella and basil
- Extra virgin olive oil Muraglia

Sarda:

- Durum wheat, semolina and Laurent Perrier champagne in the dough
- Stracciatella, bottarga, artichoke and bergamot
- Extra virgin olive oil Muraglia

Guancia:

- Whole grain flour and spelt in the dough
- Stracciatella with truffles, veal in bourguignon, parmesan cheese flakes
- Mayonnaise made with San Marzano tomatoes
- Extra virgin olive oil Muraglia



A Gennaro Nasti pizza menu, copyright A Johansson

Your version of pizza Margherita?

Margherita Verace:

Half of the flour is whole grain flour, San Marzano tomatoes, mozzarella fior di latte, and basil

Extra virgin olive oil from Muraglia

What ingredient would you never put on a pizza?

Olive oil seasoned with chili peppers (*Ed.: every pizzeria in France serves spicy olive oil with pizzas. Always.*)

You use ancient flour. Why and what do they contribute to the pizzas?

I use ancient flour varieties because they are healthier and bring back forgotten flavours.

My son's favourite is kebab pizza, with kebab meat and yoghurt sauce – is there something you want to say to him?

What can I say? It's not pizza.

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Popine

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