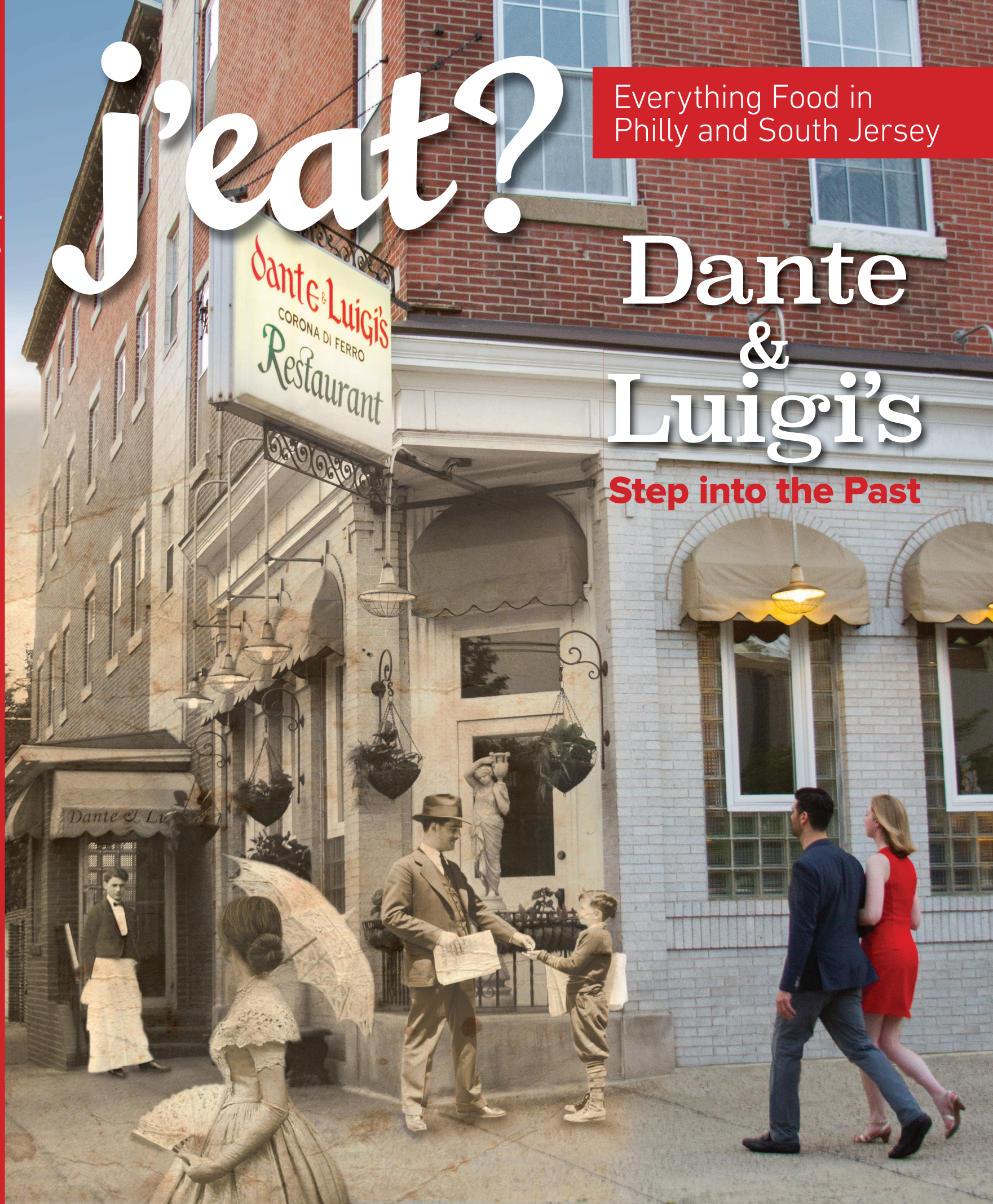


j'eat?

Everything Food in
Philly and South Jersey

Dante & Luigi's

Step into the Past







Before

There Was Old School,
There Was
Dante & Luigi's
EST. 1899

Consistent. It is a word that is over-used and usually taken for granted. It's not sexy. It's not flashy. It's not trendy. But it is what has made Dante and Luigi's in South Philadelphia thrive over the last 117 years. This Philadelphia landmark is no doubt the epitome of consistency. The home-made gravy, the lasagna, and the osso buco NEVER disappoint and thanks to owners, Michael and Connie LaRussa, they never will. Consistency is an art form and the LaRussas have perfected it.



Opened in 1899, by Michael DiRocco, the restaurant was named Corona di Ferro, which translates to Crown of Iron. The restaurant started as a small business where Italian immigrants were hired to work and even live on the second, third, and fourth floors. After Michael DiRocco's passing, his sons Dante and Luigi, added their names to what is now known as Dante & Luigi's Corona Di Ferro.



Over the years, the restaurant was passed down to Dante's daughter and eventually his granddaughter. In 1996, Michael and Connie LaRussa purchased the business, becoming the first non-family members to carry on the tradition. They did not take this task on lightly. Determined to maintain the historical, cultural and culinary significance of the restaurant, the LaRussas decided to restore, not change, the South Philadelphia landmark. Michael is a builder/restoration specialist. His first improvement was to turn what was once a boarding house for immigrants into beautiful apartments, by restoring antique moldings, beautiful stairways, floors and fireplaces. In more recent years, Michael and Connie undertook the task of restoring the restaurant dining rooms, exposing original soaring arched windows and intricate plaster moldings. The two row-homes which housed the restaurant were redecorated in classic, timeless elegance, returning the aging structure back to its original glory.



Other improvements that the LaRussas made were more subtle, as they were

warned by long-time loyal customers not to change the menu. They stayed true to their loyalists, but quietly tweaked ingredients and added many of Michael's favorite family dishes from his home town of Campobello, Sicily. Sweet Breads, calves liver and lamb stew, rarely found in most restaurants, are some of the classic, Old World recipes that Dante and Luigi's prepares to perfection. Their meat-based gravy is slow-cooked from scratch. Their broths and stocks, right down to their croutons, are home-made every day.

To say that the LaRussas are old school would be an understatement. Both Michael and Connie are at the restaurant every day; she runs the floor, and Michael oversees the kitchen. They are both very hands-on and insist on seeing what is being brought to the table. That one hundred percent commitment is what Connie believes is the secret to their success. Dante and Luigi's doesn't even take on-line reservations. They prefer to speak personally to the customers. A computer doesn't know it's your birthday dinner or that you want to sit at a particular table, but Connie most certainly does. Their operation is run like a well-oiled machine. It is a collaboration of the finest restaurant professionals in the industry, from the chefs to the waiters to the managers; some of whom have been there over 30 years. They all share Connie and Michael's vision and trust one another to execute that vision flawlessly. As a result, the food and the service are impeccable.







As the oldest Italian restaurant in the city of Philadelphia and the country, Dante and Luigi's longevity and success continue to flourish. Its reputation for consistently outstanding food is spread locally and nationally mainly by word of mouth. Connie recalls many customers coming in for dinner because Dante's was so highly recommended to them while on a flight to Philadelphia. It is a favorite spot for celebrities, athletes and politicians, but you would never know it, because the LaRussas respect their privacy and want everyone to simply feel "at home" when they eat at their restaurant. They have "regulars" who enjoy lunch every day and Connie can even name a few customers who have been coming in for over 70 years.

In the heart of the Italian Market, Dante and Luigi's has seen the neighborhood surrounding it go through many changes. Presently Bella Vista is experiencing a revitalization, as developers realize the value, convenience and charm of this close-knit area. East Passyunk Avenue is exploding with trendy restaurants and hipster bars. But through it all, Dante and Luigi's not only remains true to itself, but truly REIGNS, living up to its name, Corona di Ferro, the Crown of Iron.

Dante & Luigi's
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How many restaurants can boast a 119-year history of consistently outstanding food?

Luigi's proves itself to be the cornerstone of casual Italian dining in Philadelphia. As you enter Philadelphia's oldest Italian restaurant, you can't help but to be taken back to a simpler, less trendy time with a delicious dish of pasta, a melt-in-your-mouth Osso Buco, or a luscious Veal Rollantini. The upscale Center City and Main Line crowds often share the dining rooms with South Philadelphia locals and international tourists. The atmosphere of the 119-year-old townhouse is warm, inviting and loud in a wonderfully friendly way. Their commitment to tradition is what consistently delights generations of customers. Old World tradition lives on at Dante and Luigi's.

Sample Menu Selections

Antipasto Caldo

Stuffed Whole Calamari

Stuffed with crabmeat and sautéed in a marinara-seafood sauce

Steamed Mussels

Prepared in a spicy marinara or bianco sauce

Eggplant Rollantini

Batter-dipped and stuffed with ricotta cheese

Zuppa

Escarole and pasta fagioli

Pasta

Rigatoni Carbonara

Classic preparation of cream, egg, bacon, and cheese with peas and fresh tomato

Gnocchi Romano

Homemade with ricotta and Romano cheeses in a creamy rosetta sauce

Baked Lasagna

Homemade wide noodles layered with a mixture of meats and cheeses; topped with Italian gravy

Perciatelli Genovese

A Dante and Luigi's signature dish; veal Bolognese sauce with white wine and a touch of cream over thick, tube-shaped pasta

Pesce

Seafood Cioppino

Lobster tail, calamari, shrimp, mussels, and clams over linguini in a spicy marinara or bianco sauce

Vitello

Osso Buco

Classic veal shank braised with vegetables over saffron rice

Sweet Breads

Traditional Italian preparation with onion and mushrooms in a Sherry wine demi-glace

Pollo

Chicken Cacciatori

Sicilian style; bone-in with mushrooms, onion, and peppers; served in a marinara sauce with a touch of Sherry

Porco

Baked Stuffed Pork Chop

10oz chop stuffed with prosciutto, spinach, and mozzarella cheese; topped with mushroom demi-glace

Agnello

Lamb Stew

Classic lamb stew with peas, potatoes, and carrots in a rich, brown Sherry sauce

Desserts

Tiramisu

A classic; lady fingers, mascarpone cheese, and creamy egg custard; flavored with amaretto, espresso, and Kahlua

Italian Cream Cake with Rum

