

On the Slates: Grandma's Pasta and Chef's Inventions

[NASSAU Edition]

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La Bottega, 147 Nassau Blvd., Garden City South, 516-486-0935, is a charming little Italian takeout shop with a small dining area (two tables) in the back. Owner Giuseppe Ruta worked at Osteria and Lupa in Manhattan, turns out sandwiches and salads to go or eat in. At lunch, I enjoyed a porchetta panino, the grill-pressed sandwich containing thinly sliced roasted suckling pig, arugula and olive oil. At night, in the dining room, Ruta will prepare made-to-order dinners for those who reserve and select a menu at least 24 hours in advance. The place also sells flowers, organic vegetables and Italian groceries.

Follow us through the years... Look how we have grown!



HOLD THE MAYO . . . / unless it's spiked with lime juice or ancho chile. At new eateries, a sandwich isn't what it used to be.

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FOOD & DINING

“La Bottega in Garden City South, are making it big with innovative panini (grill-pressed Italian sandwiches) and colorful nouveau heroes. Most of the offerings are priced at less than \$10.”

Long Island Restaurants

DINING DETOURS

Great sandwich stops around the Island

BY JOAN REMINICK
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La Bottega, 147 Nassau Blvd., Garden City South, 516-486-0935. The list of panini is both extensive and well executed. Even though the "Savona" panino - grilled chicken breast with fresh mozzarella, tomatillo sauce and tomato - adds up to a good sandwich, it's eclipsed by the firecracker "Ascoli," slow-roasted chunks of suckling pig, fresh mozzarella, broccoli rabe and spicy red peppers on a rustic round bread.

3 LA BOTTEGA
147 Nassau Blvd.
Garden City South
516-486-0935
labottegagourmet.com

DISH "Ascoli" panino
PRICE \$7.75

The flagship café of Giuseppe and Marisa Ruta's mini Roman empire showcases the Italian art of sandwich making. Here, you can savor the "Ascoli" panino — slow-roasted chunks of suckling pig, fresh mozzarella, broccoli rabe and spicy red peppers served on rustic round bread. The juxtaposition of mellow pork and cheese with sprightly greens and fiery peppers points up just how noble a sandwich can be.



HOUSE-MADE DESSERTS

Joan Reminick *February 26, 2009*

La Bottega

FOOD (2 1/2 STARS)

147 Nassau Blvd.
Garden City South

516-486-0935
ilovepanini.com



At this authentically Italian spot, you'll have a hard time choosing between the moist chocolate cake layered with fresh strawberries and whipped cream, the creamy, wobbly flan and the luxurious tiramisu.

FEED ME

Open: La Bottega in Massapequa Park



A sixth [La Bottega](#) has opened in Massapequa Park. This mini-chain started in 2006 in Garden City South and has expanded quickly to Rockville Centre, Oceanside, Carle Place and Merrick. Each store features a takeout menu of 25 salads and 65 panini, which could be overwhelming if the menu didn't thoughtfully organize them by main

ingredient: vegetarian, cured meats, seafood, chicken, pork and beef.

All of the takeout options can be enjoyed at one of La Bottega's 12 tables, along with a selection of eat-in-only weekly specials. Among this week's specials (served through Tuesday, March 3) are risotto with portobello, pancetta and Parmesan, rigatoni in a white ragu, chestnut ravioli with shrimp, asparagus and cherry tomatoes, pork loin in black-pepper sauce and grilled salmon with russet potatoes and cauliflower gratin. La Bottega is at 4883 Merrick Rd., Massapequa Park, 516-799-4444.

--*E rica Marcus*

The Ascoli panino (slow-roasted suckling pig with fresh mozzarella, broccoli rabe and spicy red peppers on rustic bread) at La Bottega in Garden City South.
(Newsday Photo / Robert Mecea)

FEED ME

ITALIAN REPRODUCTION: LA BOTTEGA, ROOSEVELT FIELD

Wednesday September 16, 2009 1:56 PM By Joan Reminick



Like so many bunny rabbits, La Bottega restaurants are multiplying all over Long Island. The current number is up at 11 or 12, depending upon whether you count the affiliated Caffè Barocco in Garden City Park.

The latest birth took place last week at Roosevelt Field, in the upper level digs of the former Panino Cafe, situated between Nordstrom and Macy's. As a fan of La Bottega's salads and panini (who is at Roosevelt Field a bit too regularly), I say hooray. (Click [here](#) to read the 2 and 1/2 star review I gave the Garden City South La Bottega).

So, what's the deal with this mini empire that started out as a small Garden City South panino place? According to founder Giuseppe Ruta, each of the new La Bottega stores is independently owned. What unites them is Ruta's supervision in maintaining the standards behind the name.

This is how he puts it: "For each location I do the initial interview, hiring and training of the chef in order to teach and maintain the quality of La Bottega... we give the cooks the proper training needed and after the store opens, we give them continuous support. Once on their own, at their location, each chef does all of their own cooking in house. Each location is responsible to maintain their own dining menu. Depending on the cook or the owner, 'specials' are changed and modified every week. La Bottega's panini, salads and bruschetta menu is to remain the same everywhere."

Right now, Ruta says, he's focusing on Long Island but hopes to soon spread the LB brand to New York City and other states.

Currently, this is the rundown of La Bottega locales: Garden City South, Carle Place, Rockville Centre, Oceanside, Merrick, Huntington, Floral Park, Roslyn, Long Beach, Massapequa and, now, Garden City. Be on the lookout for an opening at The Arches in Deer Park sometime soon.

The new La Bottega is at Roosevelt Field (630 Old Country Rd.), Garden City, 516-248-4529, labottegagourmet.com.

Newsday photo of La Bottega panino/Audrey C. Tiernan

[Open: La Bottega of Huntington](#)

Wednesday June 17, 2009 5:11 PM By Joan Reminick



Huntington now has its own La Bottega, an offshoot of the [Garden City South original](#) (there are other La Bottega restaurants in Rockville Centre, Carle Place, Oceanside and Merrick). The informal spot specializes in panini and salads, most of which are authentically Italian, all of which are eminently affordable.

I stopped by for lunch: a big, bright bodacious grilled calamari salad made with sun dried tomato, Gaeta olives (with pits, so be careful), fried capers and chopped scallions over greens. I requested the lime dressing on the side and didn't need much, since the salad was so vibrant. My companion's "Caltanissetta" panino was an electrifying combination of hot sopressata, fontina, roasted hot peppers, tomatoes and baby arugula on ciabatta. Better tomatoes would have made it an even better sandwich.

We ate at a sidewalk table. Lunch, including drinks, tax and tip, came to \$25 for the two of us. On a fine June day, who could ask for more?

La Bottega is at 9 Wall St., Huntington, 631-271-3540.

—Joan Reminick