

WASHINGTON FLYER

ON THE GO IN THE DC AREA
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2013

DINING

57 Center for the Preservation of Jazz & Blues. Steampunk light fixtures throw sepia tones across the whitewashed brick walls. It's a straight shot to the back of the space (passing two bars) to the open kitchen. There, an oak-fired pizza oven turns out admirable Neapolitan-meets-New-York-styled pies, which are served whole and with imported pizza shears for cutting.

To fine-tune his dishes, executive chef Jonathan Copeland spent a week staging in Florence at Trattoria Mario, an Italian institution that just celebrated its 60th anniversary. The nuanced recipes he brought back were well worth the cost and effort of the excursion. A mounded slather of pâté on country bread hides unexpected anchovy and vermouth accents; succulent, slow-cooked

pot roast is spiced with cinnamon, clove and star anise; and an octopus carpaccio is speckled with salty flash-fried capers and a quick drizzle of paprika-laced olive oil.

Executive chef and co-owner Carmine Marzano didn't need a research trip



before he opened **Osteria Marzano** (6361 Walker Lane,

Alexandria, Va.; 703/313-9700; osteriamarzano.com). A native of Calabria, Italy, he trained in his homeland at Istituto Alberghiero Statale di Pinerolo. On this side of the pond, he impressed District diners at Galileo and Famous Luigi's. This slick and sleek new venture is in Alexandria, Va., tucked into the corner of an office park. Flickering fireboxes and well-placed candles add warmth to the modern, clean-lined space.

Marzano's considerable talents are in evidence throughout the meal. Parchment-thin, fried-to-order potato chips are great for dipping into a bowl of olive oil and anguilla

pesto. Shareable pizzas possess chewy-yet-soft crust, with just the right amount of charred bubbling. Tuna carpaccio is punctuated with floral-scented pink peppercorns, diced red onion and a zigzag of truffle oil. And the well-prepped lamb chops are coated with a briny black olive crust.

There's a particularly playful turn on the dessert menu. A pizza crust is smeared with mascarpone and Nutella, sprinkled with crushed pistachios and then dotted with miniature marshmallows. Served hot from the oven, this sliceable s'more is a great way to celebrate the Italian renaissance in the D.C. area. ☺



SWEET SPOT

D.I.Y. Chocolate Fondue at Max Brenner



The recently opened craft chocolateria Max Brenner (7263 Woodmont Ave., Bethesda, Md.; 301/215-8306; maxbrenner.com) puts a spin on classic chocolate fondue by serving it in a three-tier white ceramic tower, with a flickering tea light set in the bottom, a reservoir of warm water resting in the middle, and your choice of melted white, milk or dark chocolate on top. For your not-so-sainty dipping, there's a platter of fresh strawberries, cubes of cocoa sponge cake, cookies, mini waffles, and marshmallows you can roast over a small grill. — N.M.