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# ABAITA

## Feel at Home with Homemade Mediterranean Plates

By LAUREN BENS

The food might be kosher, but all you can taste at Abaita, meaning “the home” in both Northern Italian dialect as well as Hebrew, is pure bliss! This delectable dairy establishment, conveniently located in Midtown East, serves only the season’s freshest ingredients in an intimate and uplifting ambiance. The bar area is also popular amongst regulars as it looks onto the open kitchen, where all the tasty magic takes place! The all-dairy menu features everything from handmade pizza to pasta, all made with innovative twists and techniques.

You will truly feel like family when you experience the personalized service and warmth you get from each bite. Co-owners Chef David Egidio Donagranti and Chef Sruli Subar want you to truly feel at home with each homemade dish. Born in the North of Italy, Chef David grew up in a tightknit family that planted fresh vegetables, raised animals and even owned a food market and slaughterhouse. After working in a well-known restaurant on Lake Como, Chef used his culinary expertise, which he learned both on a personal and professional level, in kitchens around the United States, including in Miami, San

Francisco and eventually New York. After owning a successful restaurant Downtown, Chef David, whose wife prodded him to become more kosher, became a private chef and now owns and operates this gastronomic gem with his partner Sruli. Chef still travels all over the world cooking for families, especially over the holidays. For over a decade, Sruli has been working as a chef in private dining as well as special events.

Abaita uses a modern approach to Mediterranean cooking, which will have you enjoying each morsel! Try the Mix Tunisian Olives, served with labneh, anchovies, garlic confit and dill, the beautifully presented Heirloom Tomato Salad, and fresh Hamachi Crudo, made with lime, pickled carrots and parsley salad. The fresh pastas, which Chef David takes great pride in, showcase his talent and culinary creativeness. Favorites include the Parsley Fettuccine, parsley juice, black truffle, roasted spinach and parmigiano, Spaghetti, slow cooked fresh tomato, charred baby onions, fresh basil and parmigiano and the Wood Burning Oven Lasagna, Manchego, Basil and Roasted Onion.

The pizza is also a crowd pleaser at this upscale yet unpretentious space. From a traditional Margherita to the appetizing Artichoke, made with Roman Style Artichoke, Bechamel, Fresh Mozzarella and Parmigiano, as well as the La Moroccan, Eggplant, Smoked Mozzarella and Spicy Broccolini, you will feel like you are experiencing the best of Italy in Manhattan!

Find the freshest fish this season with their Wood Oven Roasted Halibut, Crispy Farro, Celery, Eggplant Scapece and Fresh Mint, Crispy Salmon, Celery Root, Baby Bok Choy and Basil Gremolata and Whole Sea Bream, Lacinato Kale, Spring Gems, Fennel and Lemon Gremolata. Just save room to satisfy your sweet tooth with the seriously scrumptious Chocolate Ice Cream, Chocolate Chip Cook, Fig Jam and Cabernet Reduction or classic Apple Cake with Crème Fraiche and Honey Syrup. ♦

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