

PROFILE

CHEF GIACOMO PASQUINI

GIACOMO WAS BORN AND RAISED IN SENIGALLIA, ALONG THE ADRIATIC COAST IN THE MARCHE REGION OF CENTRAL ITALY. GROWING UP IN A TRADITIONAL HOUSEHOLD, HE LEARNED A PASSION FOR FOOD AT AN EARLY AGE FROM HIS GRANDPARENTS AND ESPECIALLY HIS MOTHER. GIACOMO BEGAN HIS CAREER AS AN APPRENTICE WHEN HE WAS FOURTEEN AT A LOCAL SEAFOOD RESTAURANT IN SENIGALLIA.

IN 2000, AT THE AGE OF NINETEEN, HE BEGAN AN INTERNSHIP WITH CHEF LUCA VERDOLINI AT THE PARK HOTEL LAURIN IN NORTHERN ITALY. CHEF VERDOLINI WAS A TEACHER AT L'ETOILE, ONE OF THE BEST CULINARY ACADEMIES IN EUROPE. GIACOMO THEN VOLUNTEERED TO ASSIST CHEF VERDOLINI IN PREPPING FOR HIS CLASSES, AND IN TURN, BEGAN TO UNDERSTAND THE DESIRE TO EXPAND HIS KNOWLEDGE.

IN 2001, GIACOMO BECAME A MEMBER OF THE ITALIAN NATIONAL COOKING UNDER-21 TEAM. THE FOLLOWING YEAR GIACOMO BECAME TEAM CAPTAIN, COMPETING IN LUXEMBOURG AND WINNING TWO SILVER MEDALS.

OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS GIACOMO DEVOTED HIS LIFE TO WORKING WITH SOME OF THE TOP CHEFS IN ITALY. HE WORKED WITH CHEF PINO LAVARRA, AT THE GRAND HOTEL PALAZZO SASSO (TWO MICHELIN STARS). HE FOLLOWED THAT BY WORKING FOR CHEF VINCENZO CAMMERUCCI, OF RISTORANTE LIDO LIDO (ONE MICHELIN STAR) AS WELL AS CHEF STEFANO BAIOTTO, IL GRAND HOTEL VILLA FELTRINELLI (ONE MICHELIN STAR). HE ALSO TRAVELLED THROUGH SPAIN TO GAIN EXPERIENCE WITH NEW INGREDIENTS AND FLAVOURS.

IN 2003, GIACOMO TRAVELLED TO TORONTO TO WORK CLOSELY WITH CHEF/PROPIETOR GABRIELE PAGANELLI OF ROMAGNA MIA BEFORE RETURNING TO ITALY. IN 2006, GIACOMO RETURNED TO TORONTO TO STAY, ACCEPTING THE POSITION OF SOUS CHEF AT VERTICAL. "I WAS VERY EXCITED BY THE BOUNTY OF INGREDIENTS THAT ONTARIO AND CANADA HAD TO OFFER", HE REMEMBERS.

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GIACOMO IS CURRENTLY HEAD CHEF OF VERTICAL IN TORONTO'S FINANCIAL DISTRICT WHERE HE PRESENTS HIS SEASONAL MENUS USING LOCAL AND ORGANIC PRODUCTS, INSPIRED BY HIS ITALIAN HERITAGE AND TRAINING. HE IS A FIRM SUPPORTER OF THE SUSTAINABLE MOVEMENT AND HIS MENUS HAVE BEEN ENDORSED BY *Oceanwise*, THE VANCOUVER AQUARIUM CONSERVATION PROGRAM. THE *SEAFOOD FOR THOUGHT* EVENT AT THE TORONTO ZOO IN JUNE 2011 WAS A SELL-OUT AND HELPED RAISE AWARENESS FOR SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD.

HE ALSO SUPPORTS THE *EVERGREEN BRICK WORKS* BY PARTICIPATING IN THE ANNUAL *PICNIC AT THE BRICK WORKS*, A GREAT EVENT HIGHLIGHTING LOCAL GROWERS, RANCHERS, FISHERS AND ARTISANS IN SUPPORT OF CHILDREN'S FOOD PROGRAMS AND COOKING WORKSHOPS.

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