

## Serafina Country Italian Restaurant & Bar Slow Down, Relax, Enjoy!

By Julianna McClatchey

Take my advice, if you're planning on going out for a full Italian lunch or dinner, don't be tempted to snack during the day if you want to enjoy the experience. Bring your appetite as you'll want to savor every palate pleasing morsel. This is more than just a meal; it's an event not to be rushed, so take your time and enjoy a glass or two of wine and good conversation.

Italians take great pleasure in serving the food they lovingly prepare, and if you charge through the meal as if you have a plane to catch you are insulting the restaurant chef and staff and are considered gauche. So, relax and enjoy one of life's greatest pleasures.

Serafina Country Italian Restaurant and Bar, located in the Eastlake neighborhood between the University and downtown is the perfect place to gather and spend time with family and friends, or to have a romantic dinner with your sweetheart. The menu recreates many of the dishes that owner Susan Kaufman and Chef John Neumark have enjoyed in friends' homes throughout Italy.

The soft lighting of Serafina entices you from its corner location and on the inside its ochre walls are reminiscent of the Tuscan landscape that creates an intimate, sultry atmosphere. Once you've entered, your senses are barraged with delicious smells and the wonderful sounds

of live jazz. We were seated at a corner table, the dining room was full but the atmosphere was calm and intimate.

We started our Italian journey with the Antipasti Misti, a rotating selection of small bites that included Rustic Bread with extra virgin olive oil, Calamari Salti, pickled red onions, and goat cheese with Mama Lil's pickled peppers. What a treat to get things going! Next we had a salad called Formaggio – warm, fresh goat cheese dusted with ground almonds served on mixed seasonal lettuces dressed with balsamic and extra virgin olive oil, garnished with roasted peppers. This salad was fabulous, the flavors were a perfect mix and I enjoyed every bite.

For my entrée, I ordered the Ravioli con Zucca - Nati's handmade half moon ravioli filled with roasted pumpkin, ricotta, and freshly grated nutmeg; served with brown butter-sage sauce and Austrian pumpkin seed oil. I couldn't wait to taste my dinner and was not disappointed; the ravioli was melt in your mouth delicious.

I was also sampled the Pancia di Maiale Arrosto – House cured pork belly slow roasted until crisp and succulent; paired with quince glazed apples and onions. The tender meat simply fell apart with the touch of my fork.

The Cappe Sante con Arancia e Prosecco - Seared dry-packed sea scallops with a blood orange-prosecco sauce,

arugula, and fennel-leek purée and Agnello Brasare - Anderson Ranch lamb shank slowly braised with white wine, garlic, tomato, olive, and fresh herbs; served with mashed Cannellini beans and cavolo nero were perfection.

We barely had room for dessert, but we sampled the Panna Cotta. Silky crema is blended with milk chocolate and served with vanilla-praline mousse, and the Profiteroles con Gelato di Caramello - Cream puffs filled with caramel ice cream and topped with bittersweet chocolate sauce. Okay, okay, we also tried the Torta di Cioccolata alla Pistachio - Chocolate and pistachios star in this luscious cake; buttermilk chocolate cake layers are filled with chocolate, pistachio and amaretto mousse.

I highly recommend a long lunch, brunch or evening at Serafina's. The possibilities are endless. Order off of the extensive wine list, enjoy live jazz, dine in the outdoor courtyard or enjoy some late night nibbles. Need more information? Check out [www.serafinaseattle.com](http://www.serafinaseattle.com)

Review of Serafina Italian Restaurant.  
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