

# Clarendon Hills Restaurant Serving Up the Flavors of Italy

BY SANDY ILLIAN BOSCH

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For years people came to the eatery at Prospect and Park in Clarendon Hills for a hot cup of coffee, a stack of pancakes or a place to read the morning paper. The location is still a gathering place, but now, instead of bacon and eggs, diners are now enjoying shrimp Siciliano and pasta with vodka sauces.

Wendy and John Scatchell of Hinsdale had long believed their community could use an Italian restaurant. When the space opened up in downtown Clarendon Hills, they saw the opportunity they had been waiting for – the chance to open a comfortable yet elegant, affordable yet top-notch Italian kitchen. Scapa Italian Kitchen opened its doors in January, and people have been coming through them ever since.

Reservations are almost a must most nights of the week, said John, a veteran of the restaurant business who frequently helps out his wife and her two co-owners, Kim and Diane Pace. As co-owner of La Bella Pasteria in Oak Park, he knows a little something about what it takes to run a successful Italian restaurant.

Of course, it starts with the food, and Scapa features the culinary creations of Chef Romero Botello, who formerly served up many of the same dishes at the Oak Park Restaurant.

“His eggplant parmigiana and lasagna are off the chart,” Scatchell said. But there are many more choices on the menu, starting with the extensive list of appetizers. Diners can start a meal with all the Italian favorites – toasted ravioli, bruschetta or antipasto – but the choices don’t stop there.

“We sell about 40 pounds of octopus every week,” Botello said of his grilled octopus, which he marinates, grills and serves on a bed of spinach with a squirt of lemon, he also serves a fish salad, escargot and calamari.

Scatchell said the baked claims are a crowd favorite.

“They are to die for,” he said.

Individual-sized pizzas can be served as appetizer of a meal, and range from the familiar to the fabulous. Scapa’s pizza bianco is topped with prosciutto, artichokes hearts, black olives and alfredo sauce.

Larger versions of Scapa’s pizzas are available for delivery, which Scatchell said is big business, especially on the weekends. Sandwiches, as well as the full Scapa menu,

also can be delivered to the diner’s door, or picked up hot and ready to take home.

When it comes to entrees, diners can choose from salads, pastas and house specialties that include pork chops oreganato, chicken vesuvio and variety of veal dishes. Most are served with soup or salad, including the linguini with claims – topped with black olives and capers in white wine marinara. Scatchell said a Scapa dinner is often two meals in one. Portions are large enough to double as a late-night snack or lunch the next day.

“You’re usually taking something home,” he said.

Italian food is often enjoyed with wine, and Scapa has a variety of vintages available by the bottle or by the 6-ounce glass. There’s even a list of high end wines for those celebrating a special occasion.

Every meal starts with fresh Italian bread, olive oil and parmesan cheese, and there are many tasty ways in which to end a meal at Scapa. The tiramisu is made fresh every day, or there’s cannoli, Italian ice, spumoni, cheesecake or chocolate lava cake. Scapa also has compiled a list of spirits perfect for sipping after a meal, as well as specialty martinis.

Soon, Scapa will open for lunch on weekends, offering diners the chance to enjoy a plate of pasta, a salad or a sandwich before returning to work.

Scapa Italian Kitchen, 31 S. Prospects, Clarendon Hills, is open for dinner from 4 to 10 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 4 to 11 p.m. Friday and Saturday; 4 to 9 p.m. Sunday. For reservations, call (630) 323-7000. The entire menu, with meals ranging from 8.95 to 19.95, is available at [www.ScapaItalianKitchen.com](http://www.ScapaItalianKitchen.com).

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