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CIFONE'S: *REDEFINING ITALIAN DINING WITH HEART IN IRVINGTON*

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Michael Cifone and Matt Kay bring community together with elevated Italian dishes and timeless hospitality.

Michael Cifone & Matt Kay



At the heart of Cifone's, which opened its doors in September, is a belief in community. Owners Michael Cifone and Matt Kay, lifelong friends and seasoned hospitality professionals, envisioned a restaurant that would be more than simply a place to dine. Their shared goal was to create a welcoming destination in Irvington where guests from all around Westchester could gather, celebrate, and savor the joy of good food and company.

For Michael and Matt, hospitality has always been about connection. Both honed their skills in culinary school, building a strong foundation that would shape their futures in the industry. Cifone's is not just a restaurant—it is an extension of their belief that a shared meal has the power to bring people closer. By fostering warmth, care, and genuine hospitality, they've created a space where neighbors and visitors can come together to share meals and create lasting memories.

The menu at Cifone's highlights modern Italian cuisine that balances tradition with creativity. Standout dishes include Shrimp Sambuca, with pan-seared shrimp, garlic, shallots, sun-dried tomatoes, and a rich sambuca cream; Carciofi alla Giudia, crisp pan-roasted artichokes finished with lemon and parmesan; and Tuna

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Caponata, featuring seared sushi-grade tuna paired with eggplant agrodolce and vin cotto. Each dish is crafted to showcase freshness and refinement while honoring Italian traditions. And of course, guests can always find beloved classics—Parmesan, Piccata, and Francese—prepared with care and timeless appeal. Each dish captures the essence of Italian cooking—simple, vibrant, and designed to be shared.

Cifone's is also a family affair. Michael's wife, Danielle, may be spotted moving gracefully through the restaurant, welcoming tables with grace, or baking her creativity into rotating dessert specials. Currently, her signature tortoni, a chilled Italian classic, perfectly rounds out the Cifone's experience and reflects the restaurant's balance of tradition. Adding to this sense of family, Michael's daughter Angelique is often found greeting guests with a contagious smile while capturing the spirit of the restaurant through her photography, with her images featured in this article.

The design itself was a deeply personal collaboration—I worked alongside my brother and Matt to bring the vision of the restaurant to life, ensuring the space reflected not only their hospitality philosophy but also the warmth of family and community that anchors the restaurant. Crisp white walls form a clean backdrop, accented by deep green upholstery and rich wood finishes that nod to the Italian countryside. Classic white tablecloths and striped napkins reinforce tradition, while polished glassware, silverware, and brass table lamps add elegance. By day, natural light floods the dining room; by night, soft lighting creates intimacy and warmth.

The bar serves as both centerpiece and destination, defined by a sleek concrete countertop, patterned green tile backsplash, and walnut shelving that displays a curated spirit selection. With its moody, speakeasy-inspired feel, it contrasts beautifully with the dining room's freshness and invites guests to linger over an aperitivo, one of Cifone's signature cocktails, or glass of wine.

At Cifone's, every element—culinary, design, and service—comes together to create more than a meal. It is an invitation to gather, celebrate, and enjoy the simple pleasures of good food, good company, and a community brought closer through the experience of dining.

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