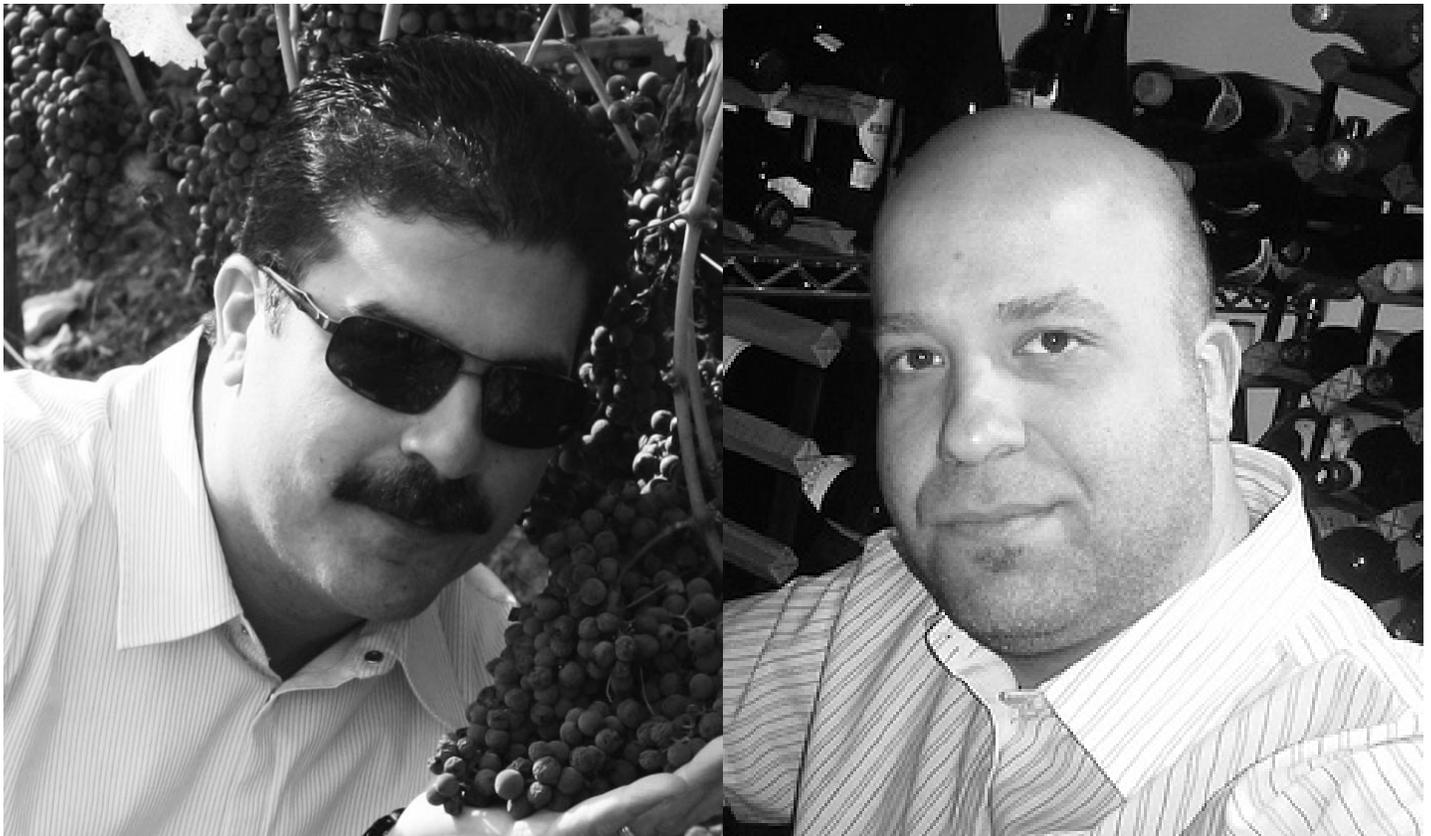


Sanfords' Vibe and Dishes Earn Accolades and Culinary Hot Spot Title in Astoria

By Krisztina Kincses Vida

SANFORDS restaurant



Astoria, in Queens, New York, is an ethnically diverse neighborhood with a thriving restaurant scene renowned for a great variety of authentic cuisines from around the globe. With many of the local eateries catering to a small, but loyal following, occasionally, a place emerges to become popular not only with its own “regulars,” but with industry insiders—local chefs, food bloggers, restaurateurs, bartenders—gathering after hours to swap food stories and sample the best bites in the area. Sanfords on Broadway

Street is now this culinary hot spot in Astoria—and this fact alone speaks volumes about the owners’ skills and dedication to running a vibrant, adventurous and successful restaurant.

Sanfords has been around nearly 100 years at the same location it stands today with the current owners’ father purchasing the business in the early 1970s to run a small old-school coffee shop.

“My brother and I grew up working around the place even as young children, and started to work full-time in the ‘80s early ‘90s,” says Gus Karalekas, a self-taught chef

who has developed many of Sanfords' recipes and now manages the daily operations, sourcing and purchasing. Brother Chris works to keep the financial side of the business running smoothly and makes sure that the beer and wine selections are second to none. "Four years ago we completely renovated the place to attract a newly emerging customer base with upscale comfort food in a trendy lounge style restaurant that's open 24/7."

The vibe of Sanfords now reflects a hip and no-nonsense foodie clientele, many of whom moved to Queens from Manhattan in search of more affordable housing and an easy commute, but not willing to compromise on the stylish and innovative food choices of the big city.

With new twists on old favorites, and an experimental attitude toward developing value-conscious, yet creative dishes, Sanfords has earned high accolades from customers and critics alike, including the title of one of the top 100 brunch spots in the country by Opentable.com.

The best-selling appetizers on the menu are the butternut squash ravioli, tuna tartar, and the Florentine spring roll—a classic spinach pie reincarnated in a light and fluffy dough wrapper specially prepared daily by a local Turkish supplier. The rustic tomato soup and French onion soup au gratin are also made from scratch and



Falafel & Tahini Yougurt



Ahi Tuna Salad



Butternut Squash Ravioli



Rigatoni Chicken Sundried Tomato Cream Sauce



Lobster Ravioli



Tuna Tar Tar



Sanfords has emerged as a popular spot for chefs, food bloggers, restaurateurs and bartenders.

entrees like the falafel wrap, mushroom truffle risotto, and gouda-stuffed duck burgers round out the favorite list.

"We have six cuts of prime meat on our regular menu, we go through 200 lbs of sushi-grade tuna a week, have fresh produce delivered several times a week, buy organic, grass-fed steaks from an Oregon farm and offer gluten-free options as well," says Gus. "It is important to us that we prepare every dish with only the highest quality ingredients."

Customers—mostly young families and plenty of singles—adore the pan-fried banana caramel cheesecake served in a light puff pastry with ice cream and sprinkled with cinnamon, and don't often turn down the dessert suggestion for a chocolate chip cookie lava cake either.

"We are constantly sampling and trying new things because our customers expect us to show them and serve them the best and the latest," Gus says. "Looking toward the future, we are planning to expand to next door by early fall which will nearly double our seating capacity to about 150 and make it possible for us to cater smaller events on a regular basis."



French Onion Soup



Hanger Steak & Mushroom Truffle Ravioli



Dried Vidalia Crusted Ahi Tuna with butternut squash puree and baby spinach



Beet Salad



Diver Scallops over Fettuccini, Hen of the Wood Mushrooms, Black Truffle Butter and Canelini Puree



Crab Cake Stack

Another differentiator for excellence is Sanfords' selection of 60 different craft beers, and 20 different wines by the glass. Ensuring the quality of each glass of wine that 60 percent of Sanfords' customers consume with their meals plays an important role in their success. A special wine preservation system allows the staff to vacuum pump each bottle after every glass is poured and wine refrigerators help maintain the optimum temperature for both reds and whites.

Success, according to Gus and Chris, is achieved only by paying attention to every detail, from lighting to music selection, from training service staff to balancing familiar and new flavors on the menu, from keeping the kitchen stocked with the best ingredients to knowing how to manage an impressive array of beer and wine. "When both our customers and staff are happy and things are running smoothly, it's very very rewarding," says Gus.





Australian Rack of Lamb



Hanger Steak Salad

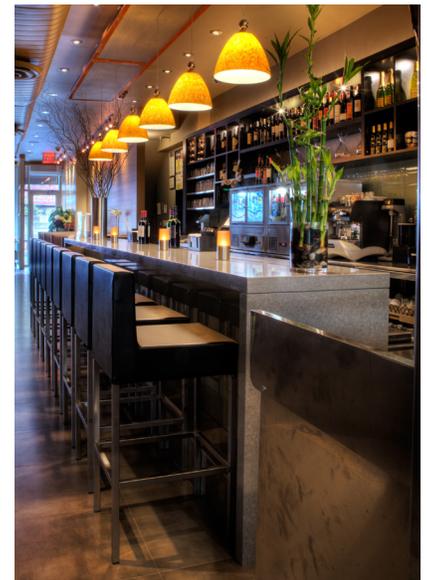


Award Winning Falafel Wrap

The vibe of Sanford's reflects a hip, foodie clientele with Manhattan transplants to Queens looking for a great food experience.



Banana Caramel Xangos



SANFORDS
restaurant

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