

# Ethnic dining brings European elegance to area

By LORETTA GRANTHAM  
Staff Writer

When a road trip abroad is out of the question (classes and funds often hinder these things), consider embarking on a taste trip at Cracovia, Orient Express or Restaurant La Residence, three ethnic restaurants that bring the flavors of Europe within walking distance.

Cracovia serves a different menu each day of Polish, French, German and northern European cuisine, said Polish co-owner Marek Maciolowski, who came to America and graduated from UNC during the 1970s.

The unusual name Cracovia is the Latin term for Krakow, the former capital of Poland, explained Margaret Szalata, co-owner. She traveled to the United States four years ago and holds a master's degree in modern tapestries from Poland. Because daily menus vary, Szalata said they have to start every day by buying groceries. "We have chicken, pork, beef and lamb prepared in many ways," she said, "and there's a big request for our Polish-style marinated lamb on a skewer."

Maciolowski described the restaurant as "small, friendly and informal." He said there are 12 tables which seat about 45 guests and also European music to complete the atmosphere.

Cracovia's employees give the establishment an ethnic authenticity. For example, Szalata told of one Polish waitress who immigrated to the United States with her husband, a Solidarity member. He had been imprisoned for a year because of his union activities, and the couple chose to move to America.

Meal prices vary from \$6 to \$12 including soup, salad

and other items, Maciolowski said, and soon the restaurant will have all ABC permits. Currently beer and imported wine are available with beer prices ranging from \$1.50 to \$2.50. Located at 300B W. Rosemary St., Cracovia is open from 5:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. daily except Sunday. During September, Maciolowski added, the European diner will be closed on Mondays. Also, a catering service is offered to those desiring "taste trips" for large groups.

Another European restaurant in the neighborhood is the Orient Express, housed in "an elegant 1914 Pullman dining car," manager and co-owner George Horwitz said.

"We brought the dining car here from Athens, Ga., where it was already a restaurant," Horwitz said. "We were amazed at the amount of time it took for the railroad to finally get it here."

Horwitz, who comes from a Polish family, mentioned flattering reviews received in the past both large metropolitan newspapers and local restaurant guides. "Our chef is Katherine Schlessinger and she's a great cook," Horwitz said.

The menu rotates daily, he said, and there is always something available, like Russian chese dumplings, for vegetarians and meat-lovers alike. Roast duck and filet mignon are also offered as well as borsos belszintokany, a hot dish of beef, bacon and mushrooms. Horwitz listed a number of other selections served by Orient Express including fruit, soups, popular Viennese pastries and coffee prepared in the traditional styles of such countries as Russia, Poland, Hungary, Austria and more.

"The prices are fairly prohibitive for students," he said. "We don't get a lot of students because you can't expect

them to spend as much." Entree prices are in the \$10 to \$15 range, and a four-course dinner special is offered nightly for \$10.75. Hours are from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday through Friday with tea at 4:30 p.m. and dinner from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. seven days a week. Orient Express, located at 201 E. Main St., Carrboro, has all ABC permits, Horwitz said, as well as a comprehensive wine list.

Restaurant La Residence, an establishment that defines the phrase "French cuisine," exists for the diner who insists upon a lavish meal, an extensive wine selection and an intimate setting.

Mickey Maloney, floor manager for the restaurant, said the menu consists of "eclectic French dishes with some standard items." He added that the menu changes in some ways each night since all meals are prepared with the freshest possible ingredients.

La Residence provides a "very romantic setting with country French decor ... and classical and jazz music," Maloney said. He explained that the dining areas are created with small rooms and small tables because the building is an actual house.

The only North Carolina restaurant to receive Travel Holiday magazine's award for dining distinction (1980-84), La Residence is open seven days a week from 6 p.m. until the last customer is served, Maloney said. Reservations are preferred, and entrees range in price from \$11.95 for chicken or trout dishes to \$17.95 for beef or veal selections. The French restaurant, owned by Mississippi-born Moreton Neal, is located at 220 W. Rosemary St. and promises to be the closest thing to a Paris holiday right here in Chapel Hill.

## Italian fare is both popular and varied

By SONYA TERRELL  
Staff Writer

When the Roman emperor Nero got hungry, he probably didn't order a pizza with pepperoni and sausage and two Cokes. And it's doubtful his momma mia made him some heaping spaghetti.

But Chapel Hill lovers of Italian cuisine today can enjoy much of the food the descendants of the

Caesars developed.

One of the restaurants serving pseudo-Latinos is Mario's, located in Kroger Plaza.

"We are an Italian family and we have been in business 19 years," owner Elaneor Costabile said. "We are last of the homemade people who cook Italian food. We make our own bread, sauce, dressing and desserts."

Aurora, a Northern Italian restaurant, is located in Carr Mill Mall.

"Aurora serves fresh seafood like grilled salmon. It also serves homemade pasta," manager Larry Birkemo said. Aurora has a romantic lamp light atmosphere. Prices range from \$5.25 to \$12.95.

Leo's Restaurant, at 423 W. Franklin St., serves American, Greek and Italian food nightly. Manager Pete Caporal said the most popular dishes are pizza, spaghetti and lasagna, not including all the Greek specialties.

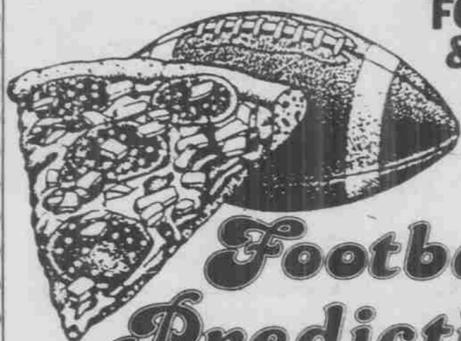
"Everybody probably says we have the best pizza in town," Caporal said.

Leo's atmosphere includes Greek music. Leo's specialties range from \$3.95 to \$6.50.

Spagg's, 201 E. Main St. in Carrboro, serves everything from steaks to pasta. Spagg's romantic atmosphere includes upper and lower seating, a patio and bar.



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