

Bianca Luna

During Out

By Ned Sweeney

Chef Augusto Lopez and wife, Deborah, have big dreams, which have taken root at one of Medford's newest restaurant, Bianca Luna, which opened about three months ago. It has the warm ambiance of an Italian café with carved tiles and dark wood dividers.

"He has been working in Italian restaurants for 15 years," Deborah explains, listing some popular Italian eateries in Nassau County with excellent food. "We want to be the best Italian family restaurant around here," Augusto said, adding he wants to open additional restaurants in the future. The entire family, including the couple's three children, pitch in to make customers smile.

The reception at Bianca Luna, Augusto explains, has been exceptional. "Once they try our food, customers usually come back." The chef makes no excuses. "I am using recipes from all the restaurants I worked at," he said, explaining he only uses the most popular dishes, stating, "They're the best of the best."

Only the freshest and finest ingredients make it into the kitchen, he said. "People love our fresh fish and pasta," he said, recommending the Italian cheesecake and homemade cannoli cream for dessert lovers.

"We have great homemade sauces for all of our

dishes," he said. "And our fresh baked panini is fantastic." One ingredient giving the chef's creations a special touch is the brick oven.

Listing some of the more popular dishes, the couple point to their slightly spicy Crabcakes with lobster sauce; Linguine di Mare with shrimp, mussels, calamari and clams in a red sauce; and Stuffed Rigatoni ala Vodka.

Other popular entrées include the Bianca Luna Salad, featuring mesclun lettuce, endive, diced tomato, red onion, gorgonzola and a vinaigrette on the side; Penne Palerme, with broccoli and sausage in a roasted garlic sauce; Rigatoni Fiorentina, a mix of fresh chicken, spinach, mozzarella and a creamy pink sauce; and Fusilli Ala Bianca, with shrimp sautéed with shallots, portobello mushroom, roasted peppers and a pink sherry wine sauce.

Other entrées include the Eggplant Rollatine, stuffed with ricotta and mozzarella; Veal Ala Luna, featuring veal francese, spinach, sliced tomato and mozzarella; the popular Chicken Fiorentina, which is a sautéed cutlet with spinach, light brown sauce and mozzarella; and Chicken Bianca Luna, mushrooms, peppers, sun-dried tomato and a sherry light brown sauce. "And so many patrons love our Zuppa di Pesce," Augusto added.



Chef Augusto Lopez, his wife, Deborah, and their daughters, Kimberly, Britany and Colleen, offer a unique Italian cuisine to their customers.

Bianca Luna Italian Restaurant

1600 Route 112, Medford
631-758-8220

Specialty: Italian.

Directions: On the west side of Route 112, next to Meat Farms.

Hours: Daily, 10:30 a.m.-11 p.m.

Dinner Entrée Price Range:
\$6.95-\$14.95.

Credit Cards: AE, MC, V.

Reservations: Recommended for parties of six and more.

Wheelchair Access: Full access.

Other: Catering, take-out, pizzeria with specialty pizzas, party platters, family combo dinners for two to four, beer and wine, free delivery with \$10 minimum, daily specials.