

# FLORIDA WEEKLY CUISINE

## Alexander's opens with new name, marks 27th anniversary

Alexander's Restaurant reopened Oct. 6 as Alexander's Garden Restaurant, according to chef Alexander Bernard.

The reopening follows the chef's annual summer sabbatical in California's Bay Area. The restaurant sustained minimal damage from Hurricane Ian and the reopening had been planned since spring.

The reopening coincides with the 27th anniversary of the restaurant's original opening in 1995 as Alexander's Restaurant.

"The name change to Alexander's Garden Restaurant best describes the attraction of our alfresco dining, which comprises more than 60% of our total seating," said Chef Alexander. "It's a popular and romantic venue and highly requested."

The expansive garden offers a secluded, tucked-away ambiance in midtown Naples, yet is steps from U.S. 41.

It accommodates single diners or larger groups. Surrounded by flowers and tropical foliage, diners are seated at tables placed under patio umbrellas and twinkle lights, with heaters and blankets offered when the weather is chilly. Tables are located on tiered levels leading to a flower-bedecked gazebo for private groups of up to 10 people.

Indoors, the main dining room is an art-filled, intimate space for approximately 55 diners. Adjacent to the dining room is a clubby Bistro section consisting of a bar with seven seats plus 15 seats at tables and two outdoor hightops for two people each.

The bar is a convivial hangout for those fortunate to secure a stool with a direct view of the kitchen, where Chef Alex works his culinary magic.

Joining Chef Alex in the kitchen is his long-time culinary team with 10-plus years of experience at the restaurant.

The chef is debuting new menus that continue his tradition of sourcing the finest product available, such as fresh fish, organic produce and grains. The menu is influenced by the chef's European training, with a Californian flair due to his culinary experiences in California's Bay Area.

In addition to the regular menu, the chef will debut prix fixe theme nights, Monday through Saturday from 4:30-5:30 p.m., priced at \$38 to \$40 per person. Monday is Italian night, Tuesday is French, Wednesday is date night, Thursday is American night, and Friday and Saturday nights are "Sizzle Nights," featuring specials from the regular early dining menu, served from 4:30-5:30. Dishes change each week according to



COURTESY PHOTOS

**Chef Alexander Bernard has announced the reopening of Alexander's Restaurant as Alexander's Garden Restaurant.**

the best product available. A happy hour from 4:30-5:30 offers half-price on house wines by the glass and well cocktails.

A highlight of Alexander's Garden Restaurant's front-of-the-house team is the chef's well-known wife, Monika Bernard.

"She has become the face of Alexander's and is ever-present greeting guests and meeting their needs," said Chef Alexander. He notes that the restaurant's clientele have been regulars for decades.

"Monika and I are fortunate to enjoy strong relationships with our diners



**Grappino's Charity Cocktail of the Month for Breast Cancer Awareness Month is the Pink Crush Cosmo.**

and we are privileged to understand their personal tastes and preferences," he said.

Dinner hours are 4:30-9 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Lunch service will resume on Oct. 17 from 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m., Monday through Friday. The restaurant is closed on Sundays.

4077 Tamiami Trail, Naples; 239-262-4999; AlexandersNaples.com.

**Aielli Group** restaurants are serving a Charity Cocktail of the Month honoring Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

At **Grappino**, the Pink Crush Cosmo features Stoli Crush Grapefruit, Cointreau, lime juice and cranberry. A portion of the proceeds from all Pink Crush Cosmo cocktails purchased in October will be donated to the Cancer Alliance of Naples.

Other Aielli restaurants offering Charity Cocktails include Dorona, with a Pinkie Promise, and Sea Salt, whose creation is called Italian 15.



**Yabba Island Grill on Fifth Avenue South in Naples offers both indoor and outdoor dining.**

**Grappino** hosts a Divas Tribute Event featuring Cher and Lady Gaga on Wednesday, Oct. 26. Shows start at 5:30 and 8 p.m. and feature a tribute to the legendary divas plus a four-course dinner. The menu starts with a Caprese salad, followed by potato gnocchi with braised lamb ragout. The third course is fillet of branzino with creamy polenta. Dolce is white chocolate bread pudding served with tart cherries and warm sea salt caramel. The cost is \$95 per person.

To RSVP: 239-331-4325.

Due to Hurricane Ian, Grappino's Nov. 7 Demystifying Grappa Dinner has been canceled until further notice.

90 Ninth St. N., Naples; 239-331-4325; <https://grappinonaples.com/>.

**Hogfish Harry's** is open for business with an updated seasonal menu.

600 Neapolitan Way, Naples. 239-776-7623; [hogfishharrys.com](http://hogfishharrys.com).

At press time, **Culinary Concepts'** two legendary Fifth Avenue South restaurants, Chops City Grill/Naples and Pazzo! Cucina Italiana, were closed until further notice, assessing damage, cleaning up and remodeling.

The **Saloon American Bistro** in the Coconut Point mall is expected to reopen pending final A/C equipment verification.

**Yabba Island Grill** on Fifth Avenue South in Naples has reopened with both indoor and outdoor dining. Diners can enjoy many of the original Yabba specialties, including Rasta Pasta, a 22-year customer favorite from the original menu with shrimp, littleneck clams, mussels and king crab in a white wine, sun dried and fresh tomatoes, hearts of artichoke and sweet basil sauce served atop a light citrus angel hair pasta.

**Chops City Grill/Bonita** has also reopened with both indoor and outdoor dining. A highlight of the menu is its organic apple dessert featuring hand-cut organic Granny Smith apples tossed with a sugar syrup of applesauce, cinnamon and nutmeg, then baked in an individual pie crust until golden brown and drizzled with a bourbon-walnut caramel sauce. Apples are topped with house-made cinnamon gelato, whipped cream, a chocolate stick, dehydrated apple slice and a fresh mint sprig.

[gr8food.net](http://gr8food.net); 239-435-0090. ■

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