

This Is What I'm Talking About

Wednesday, July 17, 2013

Fred Segal Mauro's Cafe on Melrose, Los Angeles

It's practically a second home. I'm not alone. I've seen others again and again sitting next to me at the bar for a glass of wine, like the new dry white wine from Rioja, Spain, and one of the specials of the day, like the primavera risotto with vegetables. I don't drink, mind you, but I like to sit elevated and casual, generally a space without a waiting time, to be at the helm of this welcoming and happening restaurant.

The wait staff knows me by name and occasionally plant kisses on right and left cheeks as French as the owner, Evelyne Joan, when they greet me. She's my dear friend, and it's a privilege to relax in the comfort of one of Los Angeles' hottest restaurant and cafe's.

But what makes me want to write about it? First, because I want her business to be as successful as possible and would stand on a street corner shouting the good news that is Mauro's Cafe, except I don't need to. It has regular customers, meaning people who have been coming since 1992, has an established and distinctive reputation in this restaurant laden city, and continues to draw in people as a result of being located inside Fred Segal, also a landmark.

I want to talk about it, because it's become a part of my life. I've watched Evelyne acquire ownership of it and watched her manage and create a place that is an extension of her personality, brimming over with hospitality and generosity. I've watched people walk past the hostess, sorry Ana, eyes scanning for her long, blond hair and beaming smile, hoping that she'll be the one to greet them and personally walk them to their table. I've also done it.

People come to Mauro's Cafe to meet for business, pleasure, family dinners, celebrations, and leisurely drinks, a glass of wine or an espresso and phenomenal pastries and desserts. It's no surprise that it feels vibrant and exciting to be there. Sometimes, I go and sit in the cafe and write. There's a movement inside that inspires me, like a rhythm that you can't help but move your feet to.

Another special aspect of what Evelyne has created, is through her staff, from the head chef to the busboy's. I have had the opportunity to meet each person who works there: Ana, Alena, Lily, Hector, Dasha, Chef Marlon, to name a few. They all will take care of you, smile and share in conversation about life's events. There's a kindness in each staff person, and I believe it's one of the most cherished values that Evelyne expresses, it's genuine. For me, it's another reason Mauro's feels like a second home to me, and why, given the opportunity, it's where you'll find me.

Come say, "Hello." And become a friend of Evelyne's, too. It'll brighten your day. Plus, the food is marvelous.

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