# Fratelli Italian Kitchen & Wine Bar Rebuilds Menu and Cellar in Downtown Lynchburg

*Central Virginia restaurant adds a wood-fired grill, a 72-hour fermented pizza dough and a cellar built around benchmark and small-production producers.*



From left: Culinary Director Luke Whitelaw, Head Chef Chris MacMillan and Chef and Sommelier Andrew Trottier lead the restaurant's renewed focus on scratch cooking, Virginia agriculture, traditional Italian ingredients and a rebuilt wine program.

LYNCHBURG, VA, UNITED STATES, September 14, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- Fratelli Italian Kitchen & Wine Bar, an Italian restaurant and wine bar in downtown Lynchburg, has completed a relaunch of its food, wine and service programs, marking the first full menu overhaul at the Bluff Walk restaurant in two years.

The changes took shape throughout the summer under chef and sommelier Andrew Trottier, culinary director Luke Whitelaw and head chef Chris MacMillan, with a renewed focus on scratch cooking, Virginia agriculture, traditional Italian ingredients and a rebuilt wine program.

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>
> *Andrew Trottier Chef and Sommelier*

The kitchen now centers around a wood-fired grill and a reworked pizza program. Key changes include:

- Pizza dough made through a 72-hour fermentation process that draws from both New York and Neapolitan traditions
- Entrees and vegetables cooked over an open wood fire
- Stocks, sauces, pastas and other foundational components made in house
- Increased sourcing of produce and proteins from Virginia farms

- Specialty ingredients imported from Italy, including aged Parmigiano-Reggiano, Prosciutto di Parma, traditional balsamic vinegars and Italian extra virgin olive oils

"We work hard to find artisan producers making ingredients that are interesting, delicious and have a real story behind them," Trottier said. "At the end of the day, we want to cook simply with the best ingredients we can find, both from the farms around us and from producers rooted in Italian tradition."

"A good portion of this menu is Virginia agriculture seen through the lens of classic Italian and Italian-American comfort food," he added. "Everything that makes sense for us to produce from scratch, we do. And when we source something, we want to know that the farmer or producer behind it is just as dedicated to quality as we are."

The restaurant's wine program was rebuilt in parallel, with the cellar built around benchmark estates, small-production wineries and wines that express a distinct sense of place.

"Wine is my true love and passion," Trottier said. "I wanted to build a collection around the regions and producers that have captivated me over the years, the wines I want to drink myself and the bottles I would want to open with my friends. Those are the wines I want to share with our guests."



Fratelli's Chicken Parmesan smothered in scratch made roasted garlic marinara and mozzarella cheese.



Interior of Fratelli's Italian Kitchen and Wine Bar




Fratelli's on the downtown Lynchburg Bluff Walk

Terroir, the combination of soil, climate, farming and place that shapes a wine, has become a guiding principle for the program.



Fratelli's Italian Kitchen and Wine Bar logo

"A wine list should be a book of traditions and stories, not just an inventory," Trottier said. "Many of these producers have farmed the same land for generations and are considered benchmarks for their regions, yet some of these wines have rarely, if ever, been represented in this market. Someone in Lynchburg should be able to experience a bottle here that they might otherwise expect to find only in New York, Chicago or another major wine market."

Fratelli holds both on-premise and off-premise wine licenses, allowing guests to purchase bottles to enjoy with dinner or take home.

"I want people to think of us as a wine destination," Trottier said. "Come in for a great bottle with dinner, join us for one of our wine events, or let us help you build a selection for home. The goal is to make great wine and great producers more accessible."

The restaurant plans to maintain a broad retail selection across a range of price points, while also working with guests interested in rare, allocated and collectible wines to help source bottles and develop their personal cellars.

Trottier, a Lynchburg-area native, built his hospitality and wine career in Key West, Austin, Boston and New York before returning to Central Virginia. His experience includes management at New York's Monkey Bar, working under chef Marc Forgione, training under master sommeliers and developing wine programs recognized by the Wine Spectator Restaurant Awards.

Whitelaw began his restaurant career as a dishwasher at 17 before attending The Culinary Institute of America and later cooking in Michelin-starred kitchens in New York City, including two years at Eleven Madison Park.

"We set out to build the premier wine bar in Central Virginia, and the only way to do that was to bring in people who had already operated at that level somewhere else and then give them the freedom to build it," said Jason and Gordon Cudd, owners of Fratelli Italian Kitchen & Wine Bar. "This is our hometown. Downtown Lynchburg deserves a restaurant where the food, wine and service all hold up, and that is what this team has been working to create."

Fratelli is also expanding its event calendar beyond traditional seated wine dinners to include more interactive food, wine and spirits experiences. An Italian wine and cigar dinner is scheduled for Oct. 4, with tickets priced at $250 per guest, including tax and service.

The restaurant also offers private dining for groups of up to 40 guests, while its Bluff Walk patio overlooking the James River and Riverfront Park accommodates 24.

Fratelli Italian Kitchen & Wine Bar is open Tuesday through Saturday from 4:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. at 1200 Commerce St., Suite 200, in downtown Lynchburg. Guests can reserve a table online.

About Fratelli Italian Kitchen & Wine Bar

Fratelli Italian Kitchen & Wine Bar is an Italian-American restaurant and wine bar located on the Bluff Walk in downtown Lynchburg, Virginia. The restaurant serves artisan pizza, handmade pasta and wood-fired entrees alongside a wine program focused on benchmark and small-production producers, with particular emphasis on the wines of Italy, France and the United States. Fratelli is owned by brothers Jason and Gordon Cudd. More information is available at https://fratelliitalian.com/

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