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Bistro Casanova

Saturday is the new Sunday at popular Kahului hot spot

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By CARLA TRACY - Dining Editor (carlatracy@mauinews.com) , The Maui News

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On a recent Saturday, we sauntered into Bistro Casanova and happened upon the new a la carte brunch.

Eric Gilliom and Brian Kohne were there, talking about their movie, "Get A Job," that will have its final Maui run of the year Saturday evening at the Maui Arts & Cultural Center in Kahului.

They were with a man who looked just like actor Joe Pesci - as speculated by the various and sundry characters in the lounge who sipped \$5 mimosas.

It turned out to be a fun and tasty outing with all manner of gossip and good things to eat. We even learned the restaurant's new motto is "Saturday is the new Sunday at Bistro Casanova."

Located at 33 Lono Ave., in Kahului, the popular Italian restaurant serves brunch from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. weekly and the mimosas are stealing the show.

"We've extended the \$5 happy hour price on mimosas to the brunch," says owner Steven Cappelli. "We also serve our happy hour carafes of mojitos and margaritas for the \$5 price as well."

The mimosas are made with the perfect balance of prosecco, a dry Italian sparkling wine, and fresh orange juice. They pair well with a la carte brunch items such as French toast filled with fresh fruit and drizzled with coconut rum; vegetarian quiche with roasted potatoes, fresh greens, tomatoes and feta cheese; and more.

"This brunch is the best way to cure the hangover from Friday night," says Cappelli, who also offers a loco moco called Da Local with potatoes instead of rice, topped with hamburger, two eggs over easy,

mushroom gravy and grilled vegetables.

The best part is, you are not limited to just ordering brunch fare. You may choose all dishes from the lunch menu.

We dove into the oysters on the half shell, exquisite in their briny freshness. We didn't even need the cocktail sauce and opted for just squeezes of lemon, a little bit of salt and freshly ground pepper.

We also indulged in Caesar salad of crisp hearts of Romaine, parmesan and anchovies. They asked us if we liked anchovies, and we liked - big time. But you may order your Caesar without.

Other popular lunch items include the calamari with house-made garlic and caper mayonnaise; the Brooklyn panini packed with Italian meatballs, sauce and provolone cheese; and the wild-mushroom linguine in creamy-garlic sauce.

"We started off kind of slow, but I think more and more people are finding out about what a great brunch it is," says bartender and floor manager Natalie Szarka. "Especially if you are out shopping, this is a convenient place to stop and enjoy a nice brunch with friends, indoors in the air conditioning or outdoors on the lanai."



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We chose the latter, and ended our super leisurely Saturday repast with the Marilyn crepe filled with strawberries, mascarpone cheese and chocolate swirls. We'll be back for more. Call 873-3650.

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