



ABOUT TIME

## **EAT HERE: CALDESI IN CAMPAGNA, BRAY**

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About Time were lucky enough to pop down to **La Cucina Caldesi** in Bray for a special, one-off event in partnership with **Castello di Casole – A Timbers Resort** in Tuscany. Inspired by the beauty of Tuscany, a special menu was devised by their amazing Head Chef. Here's what we experienced and thought of the restaurant:

### **La Cucina Caldesi: The Lowdown**



La Cucina Caldesi is a slice of authentic Italy in the heart of Bray. Inspired by owner Giancarlo's rural upbringing in Tuscany, husband and wife duo Katie and Giancarlo opened Caldesi in Campagna, meaning Caldesi in the Country, in 2007. The restaurant has been a huge hit – with local foodies and Italian food lovers alike. Taste a meal here and you'll know why.

It's all about good quality produce here – the Caldesi family are passionate about seasonal and sustainable ingredients, and they try to use local produce where possible. You can really

taste the freshness – and you can eat al fresco in their Italian cooking and herb garden, which is too cute.

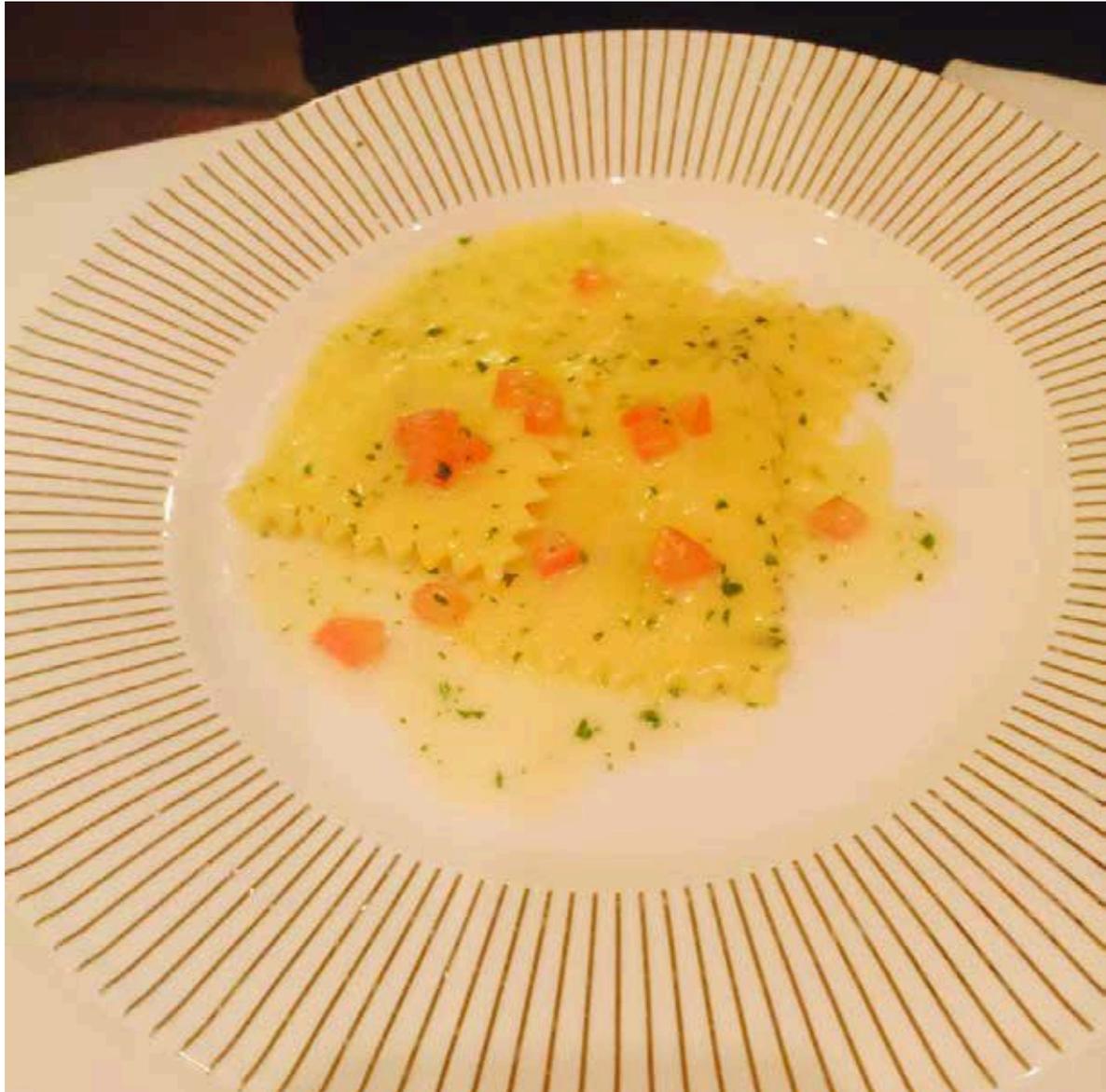


The restaurant is frequented by many locals, as well as out-of-towners looking for a taste of one of the most foodie towns in England: Bray. It's one of the few places in the UK where you get a genuine Italian feel – from the service to the food, you'll honestly think you're in Tuscany.

### **La Cucina Caldesi: The Food**



On the night we visited, as part of their special dinner in association with **Castello di Casole**, we dined on Tuscan delights. Starting with a beautiful cheese souffle, with a rich, oozing centre, and the most incredible red tuna carpaccio with capers and anchovies in warm tuna sauce and crispy puntarelle. This light, tasty fish carpaccio was expertly prepared, with all the flavours of Tuscany running through it. For fish lovers, there was also Panzanella alla Toscana – a traditional Tuscan bread salad – served with scampi and tomato extraction. Heaven.



Next up was more cheese. This time, a single ravioli filled with spinach, ricotta and slow-cooked egg yolk at 45oC with Bagna Cauda cream. Sounds complicated, but trust me, the 450c made all the difference – the egg yolk was unctuous, rich and totally delicious, and dish was a real star of the evening. For main course, we enjoyed John Dory with Jerusalem artichoke in two ways – Jerusalem artichoke is always the key to my heart, and this certainly disappoint.





And no Italian meal would be complete without the perfect sweet ending – here they served a Tiramisu Castello di Casole style with coffee granita and vanilla sauce, which was sensational, as well as delicious fried doughnuts with vanilla cream. I want it all over again, please.

### **La Cucina Caldesi: The Drinks**



They have a seriously strong Italian wine list, as well as classic cocktails like Aperol Spritz. Of course, if you want the best wine, you'll have to make it out to **Castello di Casole** in Tuscany – at this 5\* luxury hotel, they have a dedicated Wine Experience! With more than 100 acres of vineyards, frequent wine tours and events, and an estate-grown red wine blend, Castello di Casole is made for Italian wine lovers. The wine experience is particularly evident whenever you dine at Ristorante Tosca, where a large wall displays hundreds of vintages from leading wineries in Tuscany and around the world. The estate's expert sommelier will assist in creating special food and wine pairings, so you can taste the best of Tuscany.

**La Cucina Caldesi: Our Verdict**



A real gem of a restaurant in Bray, you simply **MUST** visit. If you can't get yourself out to Tuscany any day soon, well, this might just be the closest you'll get to the true Italian vision!

\*Sadly, most of these dishes won't always be on the menu as the event was a special, one-off dinner (all the more reason to visit Tuscany, right?) but it's a delicious taste of what's at offer at the incredible Tuscan hotel. See **here** for booking.

<http://www.abouttimemagazine.co.uk/food/eat-here-la-cucina-caldesi-bray/>