

Anndore House boutique hotel brings new life to a piece of Toronto history

SWIKAR OLI

The Anndore House boutique hotel may have just opened its doors but the premises have been catering to a well-heeled set for years.

Originally built in 1955, the elegant Anndore Hotel and Apartments boasted of paintings by Degas, featured piano performances and was a popular spot for high society.

The latest incarnation may not be quite so posh, but Anndore's built on its storied past with a creative take on modern style. Studio Munge helped design the first floor, and Ceconi Simone did the rooms.

Hotel manager Anthony Campaniaris, who previously opened the Shangri-La Hotel in Toronto and ran the Hazelton, says that while Anndore House is different in some ways from the properties where he worked in the past, it's similar in that staff will focus on providing quality service.

"What I've bought to the table here is an understanding of a service culture and how important it is to be able to provide the most exceptional and memorable experiences to the guest," Campaniaris says.

area, went to Turkey and Israel to garner ideas for Constantine.

"My first love will always be Italian but I wanted to push the boundaries a bit further," says Harding.

"In Istanbul and in Tel Aviv, I noticed that the chefs there were using local ingredients, and doing their take on Italian classics with kind of like a different twist, so I'm sort of attempting to emulate that here."

The menu features dishes such as: lamb ribs with pomegranate molasses, dukkah and buttermilk; wagyu picanah, a coffee-rubbed beef with tabbouleh; and farro risotto with slow roasted tomatoes, porcini, maitake and grana padano.

"Anywhere the Mediterranean Sea touches, whether you're grilling fish in coastal Turkey or in Sicily, everyone's going to put on different lemons and citrus and fresh herbs so, there's a relation in between all these places, there's a similarity."

And so it is with Anndore House. The décor, amenities and menus may have changed but a connection to its past remains.

"This is a livable place," Campaniaris says. "It's not a flash in the pan — it's something that's supposed to be a staple part of the community."



PHOTOS: RICK O'BRIEN

In order to hit the right notes now, Anndore House opened Scarlet Door, as a casual lounge where people can work on laptops, or meet for cocktails and a larger dining area in the Constantine Restaurant.

Chef Craig Harding, who put his stamp on Italian cooking at his Campagnolo and La Palma restaurants in the city's Trinity Bellwoods

Charles and Yonge Street area, was the Brownstone Hotel in the 1980s and was home to Louis Jannetia's Place from 1994 to 1999. At that time, the restaurant and jazz bar's namesake and owner was none other than Toronto's famous maitre d' to the stars, who rubbed shoulders with Tony Bennett, Eartha Kitt and Tina Turner.

"What makes us unique is our approach to it, which is somewhat more casual, but it's still very much knowledgeable and thoughtful and humble."

That approach may also draw on part of its past. The striking all-black building, which today stands out among the glass buildings around it in the