

# PHILADELPHIA STYLE

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It's no secret that Italian cooking has deep roots in Philadelphia's dining culture—and many of the city's best plates begin with homemade pasta.



Fresh gnocchi at Talluto's Authentic Italian Food.

In the early and mid 1900s, the streets of South Philadelphia ran red with gravy. Immigrants from Campania, Abruzzo, Calabria, and Sicily didn't have much to bring with them on the crossing from Italy to the New World—physically anyway. But carefully packed and stowed away in the brains of a multitude of matriarchs were culinary traditions that would inform not only a city, but also a continent.



The selection at Talluto's includes pillowy ravioli and spinach and whole wheat fettuccine and capellini.

We're talking sopressata, braciolo, Easter bread, and most importantly, pasta. Italians may not have invented pasta, but they did perfect it, and they made it part of the new American life in major East Coast cities like Philadelphia. Pastifici, or pasta shops, have deep roots here. Joe Talluto sold his house in Southwest Philly in 1967 to buy a ravioli machine for his [Talluto's Authentic Italian Food](#) (*multiple locations*), which has three locations, including a high profile outpost in the heart of the Ninth Street Italian Market. Across the bridge in Westmont, Joseph and Anna Maria Severino started [Severino Pasta](#) (110 Haddon Ave., Westmont, NJ, 856-854-7666) in 1971; they now supply a multitude of local restaurants, specialty stores, and Whole Foods. Primo and Segundo DeGiacomo are the "P" and "S" in [P&S Ravioli](#) (*multiple locations*), a 48-year-old pasta boutique that now has locations ranging from Oregon to Torressdale Avenues.



Making dough from scratch at Vera Pasta.

Today, millennial chefs and pastamakers like Joe D'Andrea are carrying on the tradition. "I studied and lived in Italy, and when I moved back to the States, I missed making pasta," says the 29-year-old West Chester native and founder of [Vera Pasta](#) (319 Westtown Road, Ste. K, West Chester, 610-701-5400), whose new-school flavors include sriracha penne and gemelli made with Victory Prima pilsner. "[I thought the] best thing to do would be to start a pasta company, so I could make it all the time."

For Joseph Baldino, chef and owner of [Zeppoli](#) in South Jersey (618 Collings Ave., Collingswood, NJ, 856-854-2670), making pasta is a way to honor his grandparents: "Growing up, my first memory is of my grandmom making gnocchi, manicotti, ravioli, or fresh spaghetti for Sunday dinner after church. It's in my blood." It's in Philadelphia's, too.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL PERSICO

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