



[MY WIFE JANET AND I] HOPE THAT GOOD MEALS BRING BACK GREAT MEMORIES, NO MATTER WHERE YOU CHOOSE TO DINE.

are to die for. Spasso has lots of elbow room and a great new lounge. You can't go wrong with pasta dishes or the fresh seafood, but be sure to save room for one of the spot's standout desserts.

Janet and I were with our kids at **Joe Pesce**, formerly known as Pompeii (1113 Walnut St., 215-829-4400) on Walnut Street when Whitney Green from Disney made a toast to *Invincible*, meaning the movie was given a green light and was going to be made. What a memorable moment! Head here for Italian fare and seafood dishes. The spot is classy but has a laid-back vibe, so you'll be OK whether you go casual or elegant.

When the movie was being shot, almost every night included a dinner somewhere in town, and our central meeting place was often **Devon Seafood Grill** (225 S. 18th St., 215-546-5940) on Rittenhouse Square. The bar and restaurant are always hopping but it's worth the wait for a table or a stool. If you're lucky you may get a table at the open windows overlooking the Square. More often than not we'd wind up feasting on incredible seafood and an occasional steak. It was a favorite of Mark Wahlberg and our family since we could hide in the back and enjoy a peaceful meal in private. This is one of our favorites for many reasons: memories, atmosphere, location, service and food.

Then there's **Barone's Tuscan Grill** in Moorestown, N.J. (280 Young Ave., 856-234-7900). Yeah, I know it's not Philly. But it's worth the drive. Insist on dining al fresco if the weather permits, and ask for Vincenzo. You'll feel like you've been whisked to a Tuscan courtyard with the very cool trellises, vines and fountains. The Barone family is first-generation American and has brought with them the gift for transforming fresh simple ingredients into culinary works of art. There's no better place for family and friends to celebrate, indoors or out!

Janet and I hope you enjoyed our list of favorite dining spots; and we hope good meals bring back great memories, no matter where you choose to dine. *Buon appetito!* ■

# Invincible Eateries

My favorite local spots for Italian fare and more.

BY VINCE PAPALE

IF I HAD it my way I'd eat Italian every night (Well, almost I gotta throw a hoagie, steak and seafood in there every once in a while for variety.) So, when *Philadelphia Style* asked me to do a feature on my favorite restaurants around town, it should be no surprise that four out of five feature Italian food.

In choosing our fave five, my wife Janet and I considered all the great dishes we enjoyed at local restaurants during the filming of *Invincible*. Ambiance also played a key role in our decisions.

One of our favorite lunch getaways is the **Radicchio Café** (314 York Ave., 215-627-6850). Great access for us Cherry Hillers, as it's just a par five from the bottom of The Ben. It never fails that we run into someone we know there. The space is very intimate and it's a great spot for us to catch up over a nice bottle of red and light lunch fare. Appetizers usually work best for us at lunch, especially Radicchio's broccoli rabe and sausage. The service has always been excellent (And having lunch there is always the perfect excuse to blow off the rest of the day strolling through Old City or Northern Liberties.)

We were introduced to **Spasso Italian Grill and Lounge** (34 S. Front St., 215-592-7661) in Old City several years ago and immediately fell in love with the place. Whether the staff is serving lunch or dinner, they have always been accommodating. We always start with a seafood antipasto—the prawns