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## **LUCIANO DEL SIGNORE TO OPEN PIZZERIA IN SOUTHFIELD'S FRANKLIN CENTER**

**Southfield, Michigan** – Luciano Del Signore, chef and owner of Southfield's sophisticated, high-end Bacco Ristorante, will open a large, lively, Napoletana-style pizzeria adjacent to Etkin Equities' Franklin Center at 29110 Northwestern Highway in Southfield, Michigan.

A recent Detroit Free Press article revealed that the new restaurant, which Del Signore hasn't yet named, will be "very casual," the chef explained. "I want to keep this place very, very simple and very true. It needs to be very high quality at a very affordable price." With 200 seats plus a spacious bar, "it's going to have a lot of energy and a lot of volume," he added. The restaurant will feature two wood-burning pizza ovens, both visible to patrons. The other menu items will include antipasti, salads, house-made gelato and "maybe a couple" of pastas that can be baked in the pizza ovens. Del Signore's list of some 75 table wines will top out at about \$40 a bottle, and he plans to import artisanal Italian beers.

The site's previously formal interior has been stripped away to emphasize the building's rustic features, including its high ceilings and handsome, arched, two-story windows. The new design by Martone Design Studios in Northville will convey the charm of an old firehouse or train station, executed with a modern approach. "It's really going to look very cool," Del Signore confirmed.

But it's the "true Napoletana-style" pizza that will set this new restaurant apart, said Del Signore, who is known for his elegantly understated cookery and clean, distinct flavors. "The dough is much lighter in texture. The whole pizza is light—that's the way it's supposed to be," he explained. His crusts will be prepared with natural starters, rather than

commercial yeast, and organic Italian double-zero flour—the finest-milled type available. Baked at 800 degrees, each thin-crust, individually-sized pizza takes about a minute and a half in the oven. “It requires time and know-how to make it correctly,” the chef explained. “There’s nothing like it I’ve ever tasted here, and there are only a few guys who do it well in the United States.”

Del Signore, a semifinalist last year for a prestigious James Beard Foundation award, said the artisanal pizza trend sweeping the country wasn’t the catalyst for his move. He has wanted to open a pizzeria for years as a way to expand without taking too much time away from Bacco, and until now, the timing and location hadn’t worked out. “This was the right time and the right place,” he said, referring to the Franklin Center’s thriving environment. Del Signore’s pizzeria is expected to open in March or April of 2010, and will employ a staff of approximately 50 people.

For additional details about the Franklin Center, contact Etkin Equities at 248-358-0800 or visit Etkin’s website at [www.etkinllc.com](http://www.etkinllc.com).

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