

**A Taste of Italy in Anguilla**  
Alan Piazzi – Trattoria Tramonto Restaurant  
By Tim Cotroneo



**Alan Piazzi begins each day with an espresso on the shores of Anguilla’s West Shoal Bay.**

Italian-born Alan Piazzi remembers the first time he dreamed of working at a bar and restaurant in the Caribbean. “I watched the movie *Cocktail* starring Tom Cruise. I thought, “That’s what I want to do.””

Today, Piazzi’s life as a restaurant owner on the shores of Anguilla’s West Shoal Bay Beach is like a real-life movie in which he plays a starring role. “I never get tired of this,” Piazzi reflected while gazing from his restaurant’s perch facing the turquoise Caribbean Sea.

Piazzi’s Trattoria Tramonto restaurant serves up mouth watering Northern Italian cuisine amidst a setting that would make Tom Cruise proud. The ironic thing is that Cruise is one of the few movie stars who hasn’t stopped to sample from Trattoria’s lunch and dinner menu.

Fresh out of college from the University of Maryland Eastern Shore in 1986, Piazzi visited Anguilla, along with his father, for the very first time. For Piazzi, the tiny island and its miles of white sand beaches stirred a case of love at first sight.

It would take awhile before Piazzzi would actually plant roots on the island, located 30 minutes north of St. Maarten. At the time of his initial visit, Piazzzi was working in the Milan area where he was born and raised. Piazzzi lived the fast life for several years as an agent for an international modeling firm. All the while, his heart yearned for the relaxed lifestyle of Anguilla.

During his time working in Milan, Piazzzi made annual August trips to Anguilla. On one of those trips, he met his future bride, Chantal. Piazzzi and Chantal would live, work, and start a family in Bologna, Italy. The idea of making Anguilla home became reality in 1997. That's the year Piazzzi's Trattoria Tramonto began to take shape.



**Piazzzi never gets tired of his restaurant's view.**

Trattoria Tramonto means "restaurant sunset" in Italian. To this day, almost 13 years after its opening, the restaurant name is still hard for both customers and natives to pronounce. "Hardly anyone is able to pronounce the name. Most people refer to the restaurant as TT. Maybe I should have named it Spaggia, which is the Italian word for beach," Piazzzi said.

A mesmerizing beach setting and the pulsating sound of ocean waves are key elements of Piazzzi's grand plan for making his restaurant special. During the course of one's meal at Trattoria Tramonto, soft music, ranging from opera to Sarah Mclachlan, adds to one's total sensory experience. "Dining is so much

more than food. Here at Trattoria, every sense is stimulated. I've watched customers sit motionless as they really get into the feeling of this place, Piazzini said.

The restaurant's feeling is what makes customers come back again and again. A business recipe of casual dining, tranquil mood, delicious food, and a view that is to die for, is a lure that is simply irresistible. "I've watched a generation grow up at this place," the 47-year-old Piazzini reflected. "Everyone tells me, don't change a thing."



**A Trattoria tradition is drinking from the friendship cup.**

The comfort of knowing what to expect from Trattoria's menu and its no hassle environment seem to work especially well for some of the world's rich and famous. Among the recognizable names found on TT's reservation list have been



DeNiro, Washington, O'Brien, Neeson, Hilton, Plant, Thurman, Pitt, and Anniston.

Over the years, a camaraderie has developed between the restaurant and its loyal followers. Piazzini confesses that he hasn't advertised Trattoria for years. His business has flourished through referrals and word of mouth. One tradition that has solidified this perpetual bond has been Trattoria's passing of the friendship cup.

"The friendship cup is listed at the bottom of our menu. A minimum of four people must drink from this cup. The ritual can be traced to the Italian Alps' region. The cup is made from a piece of turned wood, having anywhere from four to 12 spouts. Here in the Caribbean, the cup's contents include rum, vodka, gin, and maybe tequila. We also add sugar, lemon, and orange peels. Then we set it on fire and the potion caramelizes. It really picks you up," Piazzini said with a devilish grin.

Anguilla is a place where an easy-going pace is a way of life. Piazzini has never owned a watch since living on this island of 12,000 people. He begins each morning sipping an espresso while sitting under the roof of a hut he built himself. The hut is positioned on the beach between his restaurant and the turquoise waters of the Caribbean. It's a great way to decompress from the previous night's activities and plan the menu for the day.

Living the dream of building a restaurant on the beach in the Caribbean has been very fulfilling for this father of three boys. "It's like I'm living in a movie. There is no place I'd rather be."

[www.trattoriatramonto.com](http://www.trattoriatramonto.com)

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