

# DINING GUIDE

## RASTA PASTA

### SITUATED IN DOWNTOWN COLORADO SPRINGS,

Rasta Pasta combines the rustic style of Italian pasta with the sweet and spicy flavors of Jamaica. Owner and operator Matthew Taraborelli, '99, just opened his doors a mere seven months ago and is already starting to draw large crowds of curious patrons who are eager to discover what happens when you combine the culinary histories of two distinct nations.

"We serve a Caribbean-Italian fusion," Taraborelli explains. "We build fresh, creative dishes that are made to order. Patrons can add or subtract both spices and ingredients as they see fit. The big thing we go for is flavor. We're not shy about the spices; you'll taste the garlic, the herbs and the jerk."

As the name of the restaurant implies, there is a heavy Jamaican influence in both the food and the ambiance. Large murals of Bob Marley adorn the walls while the sweet influences of mango, banana and peppers infuse the menu. "One of my favorites," Taraborelli says, "is the Chicken Montego Bay. We start it off with some oil and garlic and we sauté our house-made jerk chicken with fresh-cut vegetables, a little bit of pineapple and diced tomatoes. We sauté all this in a white wine and then we fold in a little bit of alfredo sauce."

The food is specially designed to take on equal qualities from both its Italian and Caribbean origins; no single flavor is dominant. The Italian components, which consist of pastas, marinara and cheese sauces, provide subtle undertones while the Jamaican elements create sweet and spicy flavors which delightfully sting the taste buds.

"Every restaurant has a different philosophy," explains Taraborelli. "A lot of the basics are the same: you have to have good service, a good product, and an atmosphere that people enjoy. We try to source local products as much as we possibly can. Our beer is all local, as is our Italian sausage and our spices. One of the big things that's worked for us is that this place is a family establishment. We treat our staff as family, and that kind of culture, from the top down, translates out into the customers. I really think our patrons feel that when they come in. We've been in business for seven months now and we're already getting a lot of repeat business. People love the comfort of coming to a place they can relax, have good food and feel like they're being taken care of. It's a fun, positive place, and our staff is exceptional."

Rasta Pasta is also a great place to catch live music. "Every first Friday of the month," Taraborelli describes, "we have the B-Positive Band, which is a local Reggae band which has been in the Springs for 15 or 20 years—and they have a pretty big following. Throughout the month we also open up to various local bands, and we try to keep it Reggae themed, to stay consistent with our concept here."

While food, and often entertainment, are two essential arenas that every restaurant tries to excel in, Taraborelli is also interested in something on a



WRITTEN AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY LEWIS CARLYLE



HAPPY HOUR IS EVERY DAY FROM 4-6 P.M.  
RED STRIPES ARE \$2.00  
HOUSE PINTS: \$2.50  
ALL RUM SPECIALS ARE \$4.00  
CHIPS AND SALSA, BREADBASKETS ARE HALF OFF.



405 N. Tejon St., Colorado Springs, CO 80903,  
(719) 481-6888, [www.rastapastacs.com](http://www.rastapastacs.com)

much grander scale. “The big thing for us is to be able to give back to the community. We have a passion for cooking—which is why we started this place—and this is something we love to do. Eventually though, what we’d like to do over the next few years is start reaching out to the community through events and fundraising for local businesses and non-profits.”

Another big picture topic on Taraborelli’s mind is the environment. With thousands of tons of Styrofoam discarded in the restaurant industry alone, he’s on a mission to help Rasta Pasta do its part in keeping our world a little cleaner. “All of our containers are environmentally friendly,” he explains. “It’s something that most people don’t think about, but it’s a big expense for a restaurant. But it’s important to us because we want to shrink our footprint on the environment as much as possible. Even our plastic forks are made of corn.”

For hungry patrons who are looking to go off the beaten path of spaghetti and meatballs, Rasta Pasta offers a myriad of unique flavors that incorporate our all time favorites from the best of two cultures. Their dishes are light, yet filling at the same time. The atmosphere will melt away day’s worth of stress before you can polish off your first rum punch; and the service will have you feeling like family in no time at all. ❖

# DINING GUIDE

## The Mason Jar



American comfort food served in a casual Colorado lodge atmosphere. Famous chicken fried steak, slow roasted prime rib, seafood, plus soups, salads, sandwiches, and homemade cobblers. Full service bar. A Colorado tradition for twenty-five years. Serving lunch and dinner from 11am daily. 5905 Corporate Dr. and I-25, 719-260-6555. [MasonJarColorado.com](http://MasonJarColorado.com).

## Outback



For over 20 years, Outback has been supporting our troops.

Outback employee volunteers have traveled to Iraq, Afghanistan, Turkey, Kuwait and aboard naval vessels to serve over 150,000 deployed men and women.

This year we are increasing our efforts in support of the troops and their families. And now we invite you to join us. Throughout the month of March order off our Red, White & Bloomin' menu and help us donate \$1 Million to Operation Homefront.

Operation Homefront provides assistance for our troops, their families, and wounded warriors when they return home.

North Colorado Springs Outback Steakhouse, 7065 Commerce Center Drive, Colorado Springs, CO, 80919, 719-590-6283

## The Famous



BEST STEAK 2008 - *Gazette*  
BEST FINE DINING 2008 - *Independent*  
Serving PRIME Steaks, Fresh Fish and Classic Cocktails in a Chicago-Style atmosphere in downtown Colorado Springs. The best Midwestern corn-fed PRIME Strip Steaks and Honolulu Fresh Fish flown in daily. Sit in large curved ox-blood booths or an intimate horseshoe bar. Ice-cold martinis, creative mixed drinks and an extensive wine list. Live piano music Tuesday through Saturday. Open Monday-Friday at 11:00 for lunch daily and for dinner at 4:00. Two blocks from the Bijou exit east of I-25 Downtown. Reservations appreciated. 31 N. Tejon. 719-227-7333. [www.famoussteaks.com](http://www.famoussteaks.com)

## Rasta Pasta



VOTED 2010 BEST NEW RESTAURANT IN COLORADO SPRINGS BY THE COLORADO SPRINGS *GAZETTE*

Grad-owned. Rasta Pasta offers creative Caribbean pasta, fresh and funky salads, and ridiculously good desserts. We are open daily at 11am for healthy and affordable lunch and dinner. Come in for a lively atmosphere with reggae music, outdoor dining, great service, and positive people. Daily happy hour from 4-6pm featuring Red Stripe and Appleton Rum specials. We also feature live reggae every first Friday of the month.

405 N. Tejon St., Colorado Springs, CO 80903, (719) 481-6888, [www.rastapastacs.com](http://www.rastapastacs.com)

## Jack Quinn's Irish Pub & Restaurant



Specializing in traditional Irish fare and delicious American cuisine, this beautiful pub is owned by 4 USAFA Grads! The owners invite you to step into the comfortable and welcoming surroundings enhanced by mahogany, stained glass and an antique tin ceiling. The pub was created and installed by Irish craftsmen using authentic materials from Ireland, including a cozy fireplace opposite the main bar. Join us for live Irish music four days a week, and enjoy feasting on the best fish and chips in town or a tasty Irish Boxty. Sip on a perfectly poured import draft beer or ale or choose from our fine selection of Irish whiskeys and Scotches. Happy hour daily from 3-6 pm. Open at 11 am weekdays and noon on weekends; closing at 2 am. Sunday Brunch served from 12-3 pm. Banquet/party facilities will accommodate 120 dining and 160 for cocktails. Visit us at 21 South Tejon in beautiful downtown Colorado Springs. Call (719) 385-0766 or visit [www.jackquinnspub.com](http://www.jackquinnspub.com).