

Ready for a Brand New Taste of Kosher Pizza Roman Style?

Benedetta Grasso (March 20, 2014)



Raffaello Fadlun, owner of historic La Taverna del Ghetto in Rome, brings to New York his pizza and other traditional Italian favorites that are certified Kosher

It's cold and dark outside, and a large group of Orthodox Jews wrapped up in black coats has lined up on 46th street and is waiting patiently for the bus to take them home. A prayer book in one hand, an iPhone in the other.

Around the corner is the Diamond District, New York's "Jewish Fifth Avenue." At the same time, in Rome's historic [Jewish Quarter](#) [2] (the Ghetto) it's early morning. A feeble light illuminates the ancient ruins, the tall palms in front of the synagogue, the narrow stone streets lined with old houses and cafes. The neighborhood is mainly inhabited by Jewish shop-owners and historic families engaged in preserving the Judeo- Roman dialect, the small-town feel of a close-knit community, their cultural institutions, their religious life.



One of the most popular restaurants in the neighborhood is [La Taverna del Ghetto](#) [3], the first to introduce the kosher culinary tradition to the world, a cuisine older than Roman cuisine itself. A few months ago, the owner of Rome's La Taverna del Ghetto, Raffaello Fadlun, opened [Raffaello Kosher Pizza](#) [4] in the hopes the tradition might gain traction in New York.

A unique Italian-Jewish- American mix

The venue is a portal between two worlds. Like Rome's Ghetto, the midtown Manhattan street where Raffaello Kosher Pizza is located has a distinct Jewish flavor. Only this time it's New York-style.

An extraordinary concentration of Jews works here: in shops, jewelry stores, Judaica stores. True, in NYC there are plenty of restaurants that "kosherize" American cuisine, and you can find tons of kosher ingredients or seasonal specialties like latkes, sufganiot (Hannukah doughnuts), and matzah – but Raffaello offers a unique Italian-Jewish-American mix. At Raffaello Kosher Pizza you'll find American families happy to give their kids a different kosher option, Roman Jews who work or study here, mixed Italian and Jewish-American couples, as well as anyone who just wants a good slice of pizza or a meal that reflects traditional Italian kosher cuisine.

Kosher Roman Style

Necessity is the mother of invention, and for Italian Jews the most delicious, creative gourmet dishes were born out of poverty or discrimination. People willing to stick to certain ingredients and recipes often had to do it in secret, keeping their storied recipes in the family. The food had to be kosher, and pork was often replaced with fish. But traditional local cuisine had to be respected too.

So several kosher versions of Roman classics (like the ubiquitous amatriciana) were invented. However, the irony with Roman Jewish cuisine is that it worked the other way around too, and plenty of traditional Jewish dishes have become Roman staples and are served everywhere in the Eternal City.

Now we'll see how Raffaello fares in The City That Never Sleeps, serving pizza and other traditional Italian and Italian American favorites that are certified Kosher.

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