



# Fact Sheet

## **Volterra**

Volterra restaurant was inspired by the warm, traditional, largely-undiscovered Tuscan hilltop town by the same name. Located in the middle of Italy, within the triangle formed by the cities of Pisa, Siena, and Florence, it is where restaurant owners Don Curtiss and Michelle Quisenberry were married in the summer of 2004.

## **Location**

Volterra is located in the heart of Historic Ballard - one of Seattle's hottest neighborhoods - nestled among unique restaurants, bars, boutiques and across from Ballard's popular Sunday Farmers' Market. A new second location will open in early Fall 2012 at 121 Kirkland Avenue in Kirkland, Washington

## **Cuisine**

Volterra features the bold-flavored, Tuscan-inspired menu of Chef Don Curtiss showcasing his innovative style applied to the bountiful harvest of the Pacific Northwest.

Menu highlights include:

- ◇ Seasonal Tuscan specialties –truffles, squash blossoms, fresh porcini mushrooms are featured throughout the year.
- ◇ Natural, organic or free-range meats and poultry.
- ◇ Local and/or organic ingredients
- ◇ Housemade pasta and charcuterie
- ◇ Bruschetta Volterrana- a favorite appetizer from its namesake town, made of grilled bread topped with a mushroom-truffle puree and grilled artichokes
- ◇ Chingiale al Gorgonzola- wild boar tenderloin roasted and served with a gorgonzola and mustard cream sauce
- ◇ Filetto di Manzo- natural beef tenderloin, grilled and draped with Lardo Colonaia and served with a garlic, rosemary, Chianti demi glaze sauce
- ◇ Tuscan Chestnut Honey Panna Cotta with fresh local berries
- ◇ Extensive gluten free menu options including housemade gluten free pasta, bread and scones

## **Beverage Program**

- ◇ Volterra's wine list features select Italian wines along with regional favorites and has received the Wine Spectator "Award of Excellence" every year since opening
- ◇ The house cocktail, Volterra Sky, was created to celebrate the owners' wedding—inspired by the beautiful blue sky of Volterra. The cocktail incorporates vodka shaken with fresh sage, orange flower water, lemon and blue Curacao.

- ◇ Volterra's signature cocktail list, including Fresco, the house non-alcoholic cocktail, was created by Kathy Casey Food Studios to highlight Curtiss' Tuscan-inspired cuisine. Volterra hand-shaken cocktails will also incorporate seasonal fresh ingredients and herbs.

### **Ambiance**

A large wall of windows, rich red walls and chocolate brown leather combine with modern textiles to create comfortable, eye-catching banquette seating. Exquisite alabaster light fixtures give the dining room a warm, inviting feel. With its open dining room, welcoming bar, and outdoor patio, the restaurant is roomy, yet intimate. Features include:

- ◇ Custom designed alabaster light fixtures carved by artisans in Volterra, Italy
- ◇ Black-and-white photos taken by Curtiss on the couple's Italian honeymoon flank the walls in oversized, rich dark wood frames.
- ◇ Three original charcoal drawings by Dale Chihuly are featured in the bar area
- ◇ Breathtaking stained glass windows designed by local glass artist Dick Weiss
- ◇ Outdoor Patio
- ◇ Late night dining in the bar

### **Finding Volterra**

5411 Ballard Avenue Northwest

Seattle, WA 98107

Tel: 206-789-5100

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

### **Opening Date**

- ◇ April 2005

### **Key Individuals**

- ◇ Don Curtiss – Chef Partner/Owner
- ◇ Michelle Quisenberry – Managing Partner/Owner

### **Size**

- ◇ 2500 square feet
- ◇ Seats 85
  - 60 dining room seats
  - 25 seats in the bar
  - Plus patio seating

### **Hours of Operation**

- ◇ Monday - Thursday: Dinner from 5:00-10:00 pm, Bar from 4:30 pm-10:00 pm
- ◇ Friday, Saturday: Dinner from 5:00-11:00 pm, Bar from 4:30 pm-11:00 pm
- ◇ Saturday, Sunday: Brunch from 9:00 am - 2:00 pm. Bar remains open all day.
- ◇ Sunday: Dinner from 5:00-10:00 pm
- ◇ Happy Hour: Monday-Friday from 4:30-6:30 pm

### **Reservations**

- ◇ Recommended
- ◇ Children welcome. Kids menu available.

### **Parking**

- ◇ Street parking available on Ballard Avenue and the adjacent Shilshole Avenue.



## BIOGRAPHY



### **Don Curtiss, Chef Partner**

It wasn't until Don was nearing graduation from the University of Minnesota, where he studied accounting, that he decided to trade in his calculator for a sauté pan. His passion for cooking was sparked at the age of 5 when his Sicilian mother began to teach him traditional Italian family recipes. Ultimately, he realized that the kitchen was his calling and worked through the ranks at Hotel Sofitel where he was trained in classic French cuisine.

Don began his Northwest culinary adventure in 1994 as Executive Chef at Al Bocalino. He went on to serve as Opening Chef of Andaluca where he received acclaim as "one of America's most innovative chefs" by Wine Spectator. At Assaggio his loyal fan base continued to grow. In 1999, Don took over the kitchen at the newly renovated, Prego Ristorante and Italian Cooking and Living named him "One of America's Top 26 Chefs." Don also served as Chef Partner of Il Fornaio and then lived in Europe during 2004, gaining inspiration for Volterra which opened in 2005.

For the duration of his career, Don has been dedicated to serving what local vendors have to offer, from fish and seafood to fruits and vegetables grown by small farmers to boutique cheeses and cured meats. Throughout his culinary successes, Don Curtiss has inspired excellence in his team members. He has instilled a passion for innovation along with regard for tradition in his staff. Curtiss realized his longtime culinary dream with the opening of Volterra with his wife Michelle.



## BIOGRAPHY



### **Michelle Quisenberry, Managing Partner**

Named one of the “Top 40 Executives Under 40” by the Puget Sound Business Journal, Michelle’s expertise in business and passion for fine food and beverage brings discipline and enthusiasm to Volterra. For 15 years, she was involved in the start up of emerging growth companies in the Seattle area, including the Experience Music Project (“EMP”). As Director of Finance of EMP, Michelle was responsible for overseeing the financial operations of the \$240 million project from ground breaking through opening.

Michelle’s career took a different path when she and her husband, Chef Don Curtiss, opened Volterra in 2005. Volterra is named after the Tuscan hilltop town where the couple married and features Chef Curtiss’ bold, flavored Tuscan inspired menu showcasing his innovative style applied to the bountiful harvest of the Pacific Northwest. Michelle focuses on Volterra’s PR and Marketing initiatives and oversees the Front of the House. In addition, Michelle serves as the Vice President of the Board of Directors and Chairman of the Development committee of the Seattle International Film Festival (SIFF) and continues as an international financial consultant specializing in Sarbanes Oxley compliance.



Volterra was hailed “the city’s toughest reservation” by Bon Appetit magazine, and named “Best Italian Restaurant” by Seattle Magazine and Seattle Citysearch, “Best Chef Inspired Restaurant” by Seattle Metropolitan Magazine, and “Best New Restaurant” by Seattle Magazine.

### **Awards and Recognition for Volterra**

- ◇ Wine Spectator Award of Excellence: 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011
- ◇ Selected as Celebrity Chef for Ernest Borgnine’s SAG Award celebration 2011
- ◇ Named Top Corporate Philanthropist in Washington State for Arts and Culture by the Puget Sound Business Journal in 2011
- ◇ Seattle Magazine “Best Italian Restaurant” Readers Choice 2010 and 2008
- ◇ Seattle Weekly “Favorite Restaurants of 2010”
- ◇ Zagat “America’s Top Restaurants”
- ◇ Cooking Light Magazine: Best Restaurants in Seattle Nov 2010
- ◇ Rachael Ray’s Vacation (Food Network): January 2009  
Named Rachael Ray’s “Favorite Restaurant on the Planet”  
<http://www.foodnetwork.com/rachaels-vacation/seattle/index.html>
- ◇ Rachael Ray Talk Show (CBS): January 24, 2007  
<http://www.rachaelrayshow.com/?q=videos/rachaels-seattle-favorites>
- ◇ Seattle Metropolitan Magazine “Best Chef Inspired Restaurant” 2006
- ◇ Northwest Source: People’s Choice Finalist “Best Italian Restaurant” 2006
- ◇ AOL City Guide (Seattle): City’s Best Rating 2005 and 2006
- ◇ Best of Citysearch (Seattle): Winner “Best Outdoor Dining 2006”
- ◇ Seattle Magazine “Best New Restaurant” Reader’s Choice 2006
- ◇ Seattle Magazine “Best Coffee Service” Editor’s Choice 2006
- ◇ Food and Wine Magazine June 2006
- ◇ New York Times: “Going to Seattle”. July 17, 2005  
<http://travel2.nytimes.com/mem/travel/article-page.html?res=9905E0DA1430F934A25754C0A9639C8B63>
- ◇ “Food & Wine Cocktails 2005: The Best Drinks from America’s Hottest Bars, Lounges and Restaurants”
- ◇ Bon Appetit Magazine December 2005: “the city’s toughest reservation”
- ◇ Gourmet Magazine November 2005
- ◇ Travel and Leisure: September 2005
- ◇ Northwest Palate: September 2005
- ◇ Best of Citysearch (Seattle): Winner “Upscale Casual Dining 2005”
- ◇ Seattle Magazine: “Manga Ballard”. August 2005
- ◇ Puget Sound Business Journal: Amore, Italian Style. May 16, 2005.  
<http://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/stories/2005/05/16/newscolumn3.html?page=2>
- ◇ Seattle Weekly “Italian Plus: Chef Don Curtiss’ new Seattle restaurant hits all it’s marks”  
[http://www.seattleweekly.com/features/0525/050622\\_food\\_volterra.php](http://www.seattleweekly.com/features/0525/050622_food_volterra.php)
- ◇ Seattle Times: “Blessed Union brings Best of Tuscany to Ballard” 3 stars. June 24, 2005.  
[http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/foodwine/2002345951\\_leson24.html](http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/foodwine/2002345951_leson24.html)

## **Recognition for Volterra Products**

- ◇ Everyday with Rachael Ray Magazine: December 2008
- ◇ Everyday with Rachael Ray Magazine: May/June 2007
- ◇ Volterra Fennel Salt included in the celebrity gift bags “Night of 100 Stars” Oscar Gala 2006-2010
- ◇ Volterra Fennel Salt and Porcini Salt included in the celebrity gift bags at the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) Awards 2008-2010
- ◇ Volterra Fennel Salt and Porcini Salt included in the celebrity gift bags at the NAACP Image Awards 2007
- ◇ Volterra Fennel Salt and Extra Virgin Olive Oil included in the celebrity gift bags “American Century Golf Tournament” 2006
- ◇ Volterra Fennel Salt included in the celebrity gift bags at Eva Longoria’s “El Sueno de Esperanza” gala on the set of Desperate Housewives 2006

## **Recognition for Chef Don Curtiss**

- ◇ Sunset Magazine: “One of the Northwest’s leaders in Mediterranean cuisine”
- ◇ Wine Spectator: “One of America’s Most Innovative Chefs”
- ◇ La Cucina Italiana: “Boar 101”
- ◇ Italian Cooking and Living: “One of America’s Top 26 Chefs”