



ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jim Hendricks
Director of Marketing & Public Relations
(229) 439-8400
jim.hendricks@albanymuseum.com

GREET THE NEW YEAR IN ITALIAN STYLE AT THE ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART

Felice Anno Nuovo on Dec 29, 2018 Features Chef Laura Bernardi Piovesana

[For Release Dec 14, 2018 – Albany, GA] — Bid farewell to 2018 a little early at *Felice Anno Nuovo*, where you will enjoy an authentic Italian dinner planned and prepared by Chef Laura Bernardi Piovesana, owner of the Italian Wooden Spoon.

The dinner set for 6 pm on Saturday, Dec 29, 2018 at the Albany Museum of Art is the second of the fourth season of the AMA's *Fine Art of Dining Culinary Series*. Seating is limited and tickets are \$175 for AMA members at the Patron level or higher and \$200 for future members. Tickets are available at albanymuseum.com/supper-series.

Piovesana learned Italian cuisine at her mother and grandmother's aprons while growing up in Conegliano in the Veneto region of Italy.

"It's something you don't really learn unless you grow up in Italy," she said. "I started to do this just for passion and it turned into a job. What I do is according to what you really eat when you go to Italy. What I stress is I use real Italian ingredients."

Many of the ingredients Piovesana will use to create the *Felice Anno Nuovo* (Italian for Happy New Year) dinner will be imported from Italy. Those attending will have a unique opportunity to purchase raffle tickets for a special gourmet basket, which will include imported Italian infused olive oil.

"I use very simple ingredients," Piovesana said. "That is the core of the preparation. We use few ingredients, but top-quality products. Everything is chosen with a lot of care. The products come from small gourmet producers in Italy."

Kirk Rouse, chair of the AMA's Supper Series Committee, said the dinner "is all about Chef Laura's authenticity, passion and love for what she does."

"The minute you're around her you see that," Rouse said. "People will be astounded by her passion and the flavor she is bringing to this dinner."

“Chef Laura is bringing her family cooking and family recipes, and vibrant ingredients to this dinner. It will be creative and artistic. The word that comes to mind about her food is that it’s delightful.”

In Milan, Italy, Piovesana had a flourishing career as a marketing manager for major corporations including Disney and Warner Brothers before she and her husband, Dr. Giovanni Piovesana, a cardiothoracic surgeon, moved to Texas eight years ago. In Texas, she started The Italian Wooden Spoon cooking classes that she brought to Albany when the Piovesanas moved here two years ago. Participants in those classes quickly learn her three biggest rules—taste, smile and always use a wooden spoon.

“I am very honored to do this,” she said of the AMA dinner. “I don’t have a restaurant, but I stress my family heritage and I do culinary workshops.

“Ninety percent of what I do are things I already know. In Italy, you just learn them because you see them done every day. It’s not until you’re in another country that you discover your differences.”

For *Felice Anno Nuovo*, Piovesana has created a menu with starters that include a catalana salad featuring fresh Maine lobster. A second item includes all Italian ingredients—artichokes, arugula and parmigiana served on bresaola carpaccio, a thinly sliced salted beef that is difficult to find here.

Later courses are risotto with fresh porcini mushrooms and truffle served in a parmigiana waffle, and meatballs created from a family recipe that will be served in tomato sauce in a bed of polenta.

“This is a recipe from my mother-in-law,” Piovesana said of the meatballs. “Unless somebody has come to my class or had dinner with my mother-in-law, they never had those.”

The dinner, which will include wine pairings for each course specially selected by sommelier Alan Schultz, will conclude with tiramisu and panna cotta with a raspberry sauce.

Piovesana also will talk with guests at the dinner about Italian New Year’s Eve customs, such as eating 12 grapes—one for good luck for each month of the coming year. “We have a lot of traditions,” she said.

ABOUT THE ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART

The Albany Museum of Art, located in Albany, Georgia, adjacent to Albany State University West Campus just off Gillionville Road is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. The Albany Museum of Art is open 10 am through 5 pm Tuesdays through Fridays and noon until 5 pm on Saturdays. Admission is free.

For more information about the AMA please visit our website, www.albanymuseum.com or call 229.439.8400.

CAPTION INFORMATION:

Chef Laura Bernardi Piovesana, owner of the Italian Wooden Spoon, will prepare an Italian meal using many specially imported Italian ingredients on Dec 29, 2018 at *Felice Anno Nuovo*, an early greeting of the New Year at the Albany Museum of Art. Participants also will be able to purchase tickets for an Italian gourmet basket. The event is part of the AMA’s Fine Art of Dining Culinary Series. (Photo courtesy of Laura Bernardi Piovesana)

###