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A taste of Italy

By Nicholas Boer
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IT'S CALLED INCONTRO, meaning "encounter" in Italy. Co-owner Gianni Bartoletti hails from a town near the Swiss border (at the top of the boot), while his partner, Luigi Troccoli, comes from Puglia, in Italy's heel.

Scheduled to open early next month, Incontro plans to offer simple, boldly flavored Italian dishes that showcase the country's bounty. But don't expect mounds of mediocrity. Think simply grilled fish with a relish of tomato, cucumber and dill, or paillard of veal brushed with herb-infused olive oil.

"You don't need to put a pile of stuff on the plate when you have quality," Bartoletti says.

Bartoletti went to culinary school in Italy when he was 14. For the last 10 years, he's worked with his partner at an Italian restaurant in San Francisco.

Formerly Kabob House, the 60-seat restaurant has custom, cozy touches from when it was a French restaurant which Bartoletti wants to emphasize (his time spent in northern Italy and on the cruise ship has instilled an appreciation in him for the romantic European style). He's added a tile floor and swathed the walls in warm yellows hues.

Bartoletti plans dinner prices of \$6-\$7 for appetizers, \$10-\$13 for pastas, and under-\$20 for entrees. They'll be baking their own bread and hope to start lunch and have a full liquor license by July.