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Mondo - Brunello Thailand and Luciano Improta: the story of a multifaceted Italian entrepreneurship now living in Bangkok

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Great energy, humanity, sensitivity: Luciano Improta -with his restaurant venue Brunello Thailand- proves once again what is the value of Italian Genius in the World.

All you have to do is turn left diverging from King Rama IX Road and enter Soi 58 and you find yourself in front of a corner of typical Italian style immersed in the urban fabric of Bangkok: this is Brunello Thailand, the Italian restaurant venue that is the very promanation of an Italian who has made work and creativity his "signature" in the world. Luciano Improta, 50, you immediately recognize him by the energy that is unleashed by his very way of being, always alive, on the move, hyper-active. This great energy of his has given birth to a multifaceted entrepreneurship. "It's true," Improta says, "my work has been in the jewelry business for the great part of my life span. As a boy, I was the sous-chef of a famous restaurant in my city. During these years I learned the secret recipes and techniques and developed a passion for Italian food and its simple never sophisticated ingredients. Let's say that the two aspects have had a parallel life in the course of my existence. As an entrepreneur in the jewelry business, I also opened my own business here in Bangkok that grew to have sixty employees. Then, however, the ever-increasing cost incidence led me to dismantle that manufacturing location but the company that is interested in jewelry still continues to exist today and is within the scope of my business interests. Catering came later, when I moved to Thailand. And how did the idea of Brunello's come about? The restaurant was born four years ago. Italy for me was a sinking nation, I was looking for something else. The jewelry store was my first step, never completely abandoned, as I said. And then we were also faced with a real world drama epic which was the Covid. In spite of everything, the Brunello restaurant came back to life. During those sad phases of the pandemic, my restaurant was an active part of preparing meals-in Thai cuisine-to be offered to the people who were unable to work and have a source of income, all government measures to help their people. This heartens and refreshes me; I am proud to have been an active participant in this phase of national recovery. Today Brunello hosts a select clientele who know exactly what they want when they want to encounter the true and original taste of Italian Cuisine, as it is in my personal history, they have been instructed to use typical ingredients and not hybrid forms or contaminations. The classic example of cream in Carbonara That's right, here at my place cream in Carbonara is not used. I remember one day, one of my affectionate customers, a refined lady who knows Italian Cuisine well, who -faced with a dish of Carbonara prepared with cream- pointed out to me that in a catering establishment like mine this was a kind of "discordant note." This is an anecdote that I do not forget and that has been very useful to me, especially in supporting my idea of typical catering. So you use all imported Italian products? Yes, I

have always preferred to import everything, even herbs and plants are not grown or hybridized in Thailand, my basil, even arugula, come from Italy, to give examples. The same is the case with cheeses and dairy products, they are not prepared and made in Thailand with local milk, my personal idea is to hand the customer an entirely Italian product. What kind is your clientele? Given the location in the metropolitan area of Bangkok, and also given the philosophy that characterizes my dining establishment, my clientele is ninety percent high-end Thai, they are familiar with Italian Cuisine in its details, they are attentive and know what they want, even and not only in the area of wines. My restaurant is not ascribable to the kind of international or overly touristy clientele as is the case with the dining establishments found in more central Districts of Bangkok. At the same time, however, this allows me greater freedom of action in upholding my personal philosophy in restaurant management and not having to compromise in order to meet the needs of a clientele that perhaps has somewhat confused knowledge about Italian Cuisine. Do you have plans for your upcoming future? I have many, really many in my mind, so many that they crowd in and every day I think of a new one. However, very pragmatically and down-to-earth, I know that there is a need to think step by step. Everything can be done but one step at a time. Brunello Thailand, 15 Rama IX Soi 58, Khwaeng Suan Luang, Suan Luang, Bangkok 10250 Phone: 065 839 6247

di Francesco Tortora Giovedì 05 Gennaio 2023