

# The SMART RESTAURATEUR

◆◆◆ SPECIAL EDITION ◆◆◆

March 2002

## More than 2,000 New Jersey restaurants are now smokefree

Every day, another restaurant is added to New Jersey's smokefree dining database. *100% Smokefree Dining in New Jersey* lists more than 2,000 individual restaurants, plus chains with smokefree policies.

New Jersey restaurant owners and managers are responding to increasing customer demand, to new information on the health hazards of secondhand smoke, and to new laws and threats of lawsuits. They've discovered it's good for business too.

This special issue showcases the stories of four smokefree restaurants. All of them used to allow smoking but now they each have 5-10 years of experience being smokefree. All the owners were hesitant to go smokefree but now all are adamant that they would never go back to allowing smoking.

### FACTS AT A GLANCE:

#### MENU

Two are gourmet restaurants.  
One does pizza by the slice.

#### LIQUOR SERVICE

Three have liquor licenses and bars – one is connected to a large liquor store that also sells tobacco.

#### SIZE

Two are large (90-150 seats). Two are smaller (40-89 seats). All have multiple seating areas.

#### AL FRESCO DINING

Two have smokefree outdoor eating areas.

#### LOCATION

One is in a city. Three are in suburban areas.



Elizabeth Alger and James Black, owners,  
*The Frog and The Peach*

### The Frog and The Peach

Restaurant and Bar

at Hiram Square  
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

732/846-3216



The first day of spring 1997 brought fresh air to The Frog and The Peach. Our dining rooms, bar and patio became smoke free. This decision was applauded by an overwhelming majority of our clientele. Our sales have increased month by month, compared to past years.

Our bar has become an increasingly popular place to dine. Rather than a half full bar with patrons nursing cocktails, we now experience a full bar of guests savoring menu items from appetizers or desserts to four course dinners!

Once inside the front door, the smell of smoke has been replaced by the welcoming aroma of our cuisine. Our staff is happier, our guests are happier and we, as owners, are proud to provide a cleaner, healthier environment for all our guests.

For our establishment, smoke free was a decision we should not have hesitated to make.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth W. Alger  
Owner

James M. Black  
Owner

# *pierre's*

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995 Mt. Kemble Avenue  
Morristown, NJ 07960  
973-425-1212

We always dreamed of owning our own restaurant. We worked hard to get the money. We planned how to succeed in a tough business. Michael studied in Paris, graduating from the Cordon Bleu and the Ecole Hoteliere. In 1979 we bought the Brass Rail in Hoboken and introduced a French menu. People said a French restaurant would never make it in Hoboken but our restaurant helped start the restaurant renaissance in Hoboken.

Only we had one big problem. Our restaurant was always full of smoke from cigarettes and so was our home, above the restaurant. We tried air filters, "smokeaters", everything we could think of. Nothing worked. Our business and our home always smelled of smoke. We hated it but we thought we just had to put up with it.

Then the smoking gave us an even bigger problem. In 1987 we had a fire started by a cigarette in our restaurant. We lost our business and our home. That was it. We decided we would open a new restaurant when we could recover and we would do it our way — no smoking.

In 1992 we opened Pierre's, just off the village green in Morristown. We had only 40 seats to fill, we believed we could do that with good food and clean air, and we made our restaurant entirely nonsmoking. We were right. Our business was so successful we had to move to a bigger site in just 18 months. We loved the smokefree environment and so did our customers.

Since 1993 we've been in our new location, south of Morristown in Harding Township, in a building with 150 seats, including a bar with an extensive wine selection. We feature our smokefree policy on our sign out front.

Our smokefree policy has only helped our business. We get nothing but thanks from our customers. We're booked full every night. We're booked weeks in advance for weekend dining. We've just expanded, adding a dining porch. We attribute a lot of our success to being smokefree. Today, many people just won't go to a restaurant that allows smoking.

There are many other benefits of a smokefree policy. We have no burn holes in our tablecloths. There are no cigarette butts in the dishes. We never need to buy ashtrays or replace stolen ashtrays. There's no stench of tobacco in the bathroom.

We bought our first restaurant from the widow of the former owner — he had died of lung cancer. We don't know whether he was a smoker or if he got lung cancer from breathing the smoke in his restaurant. But one more reason we're adamant about our smokefree policy is to protect our employees and ourselves from the health hazards of secondhand smoke. We'd never go back to allowing smoking in our restaurant.

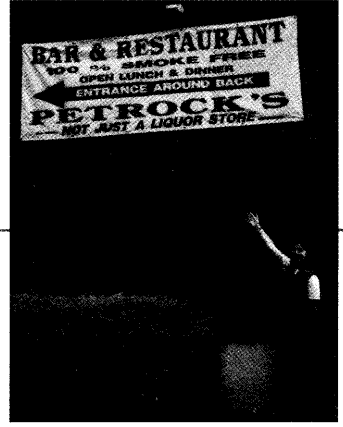
*Michael Peters*

*Marybeth Peters*

Michael and Marybeth Peters



*Michael and Marybeth Peters, owners, Pierre's*



In 1961 our family opened our liquor store and our bar/restaurant. We allowed smoking in both. We expanded our liquor store in 1977 and made it nonsmoking. We continued to sell tobacco products. We just don't allow smoking in our store. My father was asthmatic and was extremely sensitive to smoke. It made him very ill. He would have loved to have made the bar and grille smokefree. My Dad was ahead of his time. Instead, in 1979 he closed the bar.

Well, my Dad passed away in 1989. In 1992 we reopened the bar with his wish to be smokefree. We have 38 table seats and 25 bar seats, and a menu that ranges from steaks, burgers, and chicken to vegetarian entrees and sandwiches. Some of our family members considered having smoking and non-smoking sections. But we all know that really doesn't work in small places.

I was the chosen one to be managing the restaurant 12-15 hours a day and there was no way I would work in a hazardous environment and jeopardize my health. (When I was in my 20s, I worked in smoky bars and, whenever I had a checkup, the doctor always asked me if I smoked. Apparently there was evidence of a smoker's lungs. I have never smoked in my life. The secondhand smoke was affecting me.)

Ours was one of the first smokefree restaurants in New Jersey. A few people were angry and said we'd never make it. But our business has done very well. We're busier every year. Nonsmokers seek us out — that's what keeps increasing our business. People who smoke come here, too, and say they like it.

Lately we're getting a fair business in new mothers who want to get out and have a drink and dinner in a place they feel comfortable bringing their babies. And there are lots of new families in our neighborhood.

Everything in our bar and restaurant stays so much cleaner now that we're smokefree. Our ceiling tiles are still white after five years. Maintenance is minimal. We only clean rugs and upholstery once a year, though, as we become busier, we will be cleaning bi-yearly. Without smoking, we don't have that awful lingering smell and food aromas and flavors are better.

One realtor did tell me he takes customers to smoking-permitted restaurants in case they smoke. He said he would bring his business here if I permitted smoking and I could possibly double or triple my business. I would never do it in a million years. There is nothing wrong with a slow business growth. It's bound to last longer in the scheme of things.

I know other restaurant owners that want to go smokefree but are afraid they'll lose customers. I tell them they'll get new business from people who want to go out and avoid the smoke. These owners shouldn't sacrifice their own health. They work 12-15 hours a day to make a good future for themselves, but they may have no future if they lose their health because of secondhand smoke.

We always include our smokefree policy in our marketing. Right now we're running newspaper ads that say "We're grillin' up the best steaks, burgers, and chicken but we ain't smokin'. Petrock's Bar & Grille totally nonsmoking restaurant." And we'll always be smokefree. WE DID IT DAD!

*Bonnie Petrock*

Bonnie Petrock  
for the Petrock Family

# Joe's Pizzeria & Vittoria Ristorante

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101 Springfield Avenue, Summit, New Jersey 07901  
(908) 522-0615 Fax: (908) 522-0348

We have been in the hospitality business since 1981 and we have been a smokefree establishment since 1994.

Our first business was Joe's Pizzeria, with take-out service only. Even there, we were bothered when customers came in smoking while they placed orders.

In 1994, we opened our new building containing Vittoria's Restaurant, featuring fresh, made-to-order, daily specials, and Joe's Pizzeria, with table and take-out service. We decided to make our new business smokefree for a number of reasons.

Our father quit smoking and wanted our new place to be all nonsmoking. We noticed lots of other people are quitting smoking and like to go to smokefree places. So we thought it would be more attractive to customers.

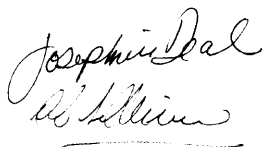
Even though some of our customers, our co-workers, and our family staff members smoke, they have been very cooperative in maintaining our smokefree environment. We've gotten many compliments on our clean air policy. That didn't surprise us. Even those of us who smoke don't like being around smoke when we eat out.

Altogether our smokefree policy is an advantage in many ways. With smoking, there's always some problem — dirty ashtrays to look at, butts in the dishes.

Besides, eventually there will be a law making restaurants smokefree. This way, we got a jump on the competition and found a way to make our restaurant stand out from other restaurants.

With the 21st century, comes increased awareness of our environment and, in turn, our surroundings. People are becoming more and more aware of the ill effects of smoking and secondary smoking. We sincerely hope that there is a day in the near future when everybody realizes the negativity of smoking and works together in making this world a smokefree place.

We're proud that our family is making that day come sooner.



Josephine Deal and Al Iellimo  
for the Iellimo Family



Josephine Deal (center) and Al Iellimo (right), owners,  
Joe's Pizzeria and Vittoria's Restaurant, with staff

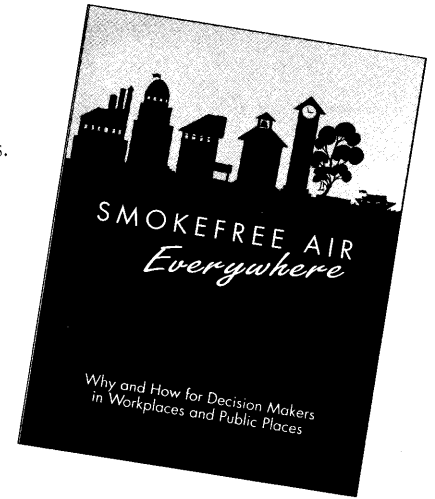
## NJ GASP will help you promote your smokefree restaurant:


- ✓ New Jersey GASP does statewide advertising and publicity featuring smokefree dining.
- ✓ New Jersey GASP will list your smokefree restaurant in *100% Smokefree Dining in New Jersey*. This directory is distributed statewide to:
  - patrons
  - restaurant reviewers
  - newspapers
  - health and consumer organizations
  - legislators
  - New Jersey GASP members
- ✓ New Jersey GASP will put your restaurant on [www.njgasp.org](http://www.njgasp.org).
- ✓ New Jersey GASP will supply you with free signs.



## NJ GASP will help you make your restaurant smokefree:

- ✓ *Smokefree Dining Is Best* is a short explanation of the advantages.
- ✓ *Smokefree Air Everywhere* is a why and how manual for decision makers in workplace and public places.





**New Jersey GASP**  
Group Against Smoking Pollution

105 Mountain Avenue, Summit, NJ 07901  
908 273-9368 fax 908 273-9222  
info@njgasp.org www.njgasp.org

*New Jersey GASP is a nonprofit educational organization, founded in 1974. Goals: to secure smokefree air for nonsmokers, to ensure tobacco-free lives for children*

Please detach this information slip and return to ↘

### Restaurant Information

My name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Name of restaurant \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Website \_\_\_\_\_

New Jersey GASP  
105 Mountain Avenue, Summit, NJ 07901  
908 273-9368 fax 908 273-9222  
info@njgasp.org www.njgasp.org

Please send me:

- additional copy of *The Smart Restaurateur*
- Smokefree Dining Is Best*
- 100% Smokefree Dining in New Jersey*
- Smokefree Air Everywhere* brochure/order form
- "Welcome to 100% Smokefree Dining," decal/sign
- Yes, my restaurant is smokefree, and I would like to be listed in *100% Smokefree Dining in New Jersey* and on [www.njgasp.org](http://www.njgasp.org)

My restaurant is in \_\_\_\_\_ County