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Chef Matteo Vigotti Wows with Both Traditional and Innovative Cuisine

One chef tests boundaries while still paying homage to his country's roots

Oct 7, 2015 | 10:41 am By [Michelle Sandstrom \(http://www.thedaily meal.com/users/michelle-sandstrom/contact\)](http://www.thedaily meal.com/users/michelle-sandstrom/contact), Staff Writer



Michelle Sandstrom

Michelin-starred chef Matteo Vigotti is the Executive Chef of Peck, which has been considered an esteemed institution in the city of Milan since 1883.

Meet Michelin-starred Chef Matteo Vigotti, the executive chef of Peck and the man behind the official restaurant of the Italian pavilion at Expo Milano 2015.

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Vigotti has a reputation for creating sophisticated Italian food, but innovation in the kitchen is also very important to him. This might not be so notable in America or Canada, where famed chefs are usually all about the next new thing. However, in **Italy** (<http://www.thedaily meal.com/25-best-restaurants-italy-slideshow>) where food as a whole is deeply rooted in tradition, it is something out of the ordinary.

Pick a dish from any region in **Italy** (<http://www.thedaily meal.com/eat/eating-across-italy>) and you may discover a history that goes back hundreds of years. There is often a strongly perceived "right way" to make each dish, and variation from that method is not often appreciated. In such a traditional food culture, you may not necessarily expect to see much success for a restaurant that wants to try something different. However, both **Ristorante Al Peck** (<http://www.peck.it/en/>) and Peck Italian Bar have certainly done well under Vigotti's guidance.

Perhaps it's because, while Vigotti definitely gets excited about trying new things with his dishes, he ultimately seems to find a balance between paying homage to traditional food and allowing room for his new ideas. After all, there is much to be said for carrying on Italy's traditions, but a single chef trying something different in the kitchen can lead to great new dishes.



Michelle Sandstrom

A table set at Peck a Palazzo Italia. The restaurant has been key in hosting numerous foreign dignitaries visiting during Expo Milano 2015.

Vigotti says that **Italian** (<http://www.thedaily meal.com/basics-italian-wine-what-s-bottle>) guests at his restaurant respond to his food “very well because people are curious. The plates are not extreme. The guest can always see the raw ingredients and how they have been cooked.” However, well aware that his reputation as an innovator proceeds him, Vigotti also notes that diners who visit will usually be people open to trying new things.

It also certainly doesn't hurt that Peck itself is an institution with history in **Milan** (<http://www.thedaily meal.com/travel/620-square-miles-food-celebration-and-conservation-milan>), dating back to 1883 when it was founded by Franz Peck, a salumi maker from Prague. Originally, Peck was not a restaurant at all, but a small deli that has managed to grow over the years. Today, Peck is still a beloved gourmet food shop offering traditionally cured meats, cheese, meat, bread, pasta, and wine. The elegant Ristorante Al Peck, which was added to the shop in 2013, is also thriving with Chef Vigotti at the helm.

Both Peck's long history in Milan and Vigotti's stellar reputation most likely helped to secure Peck the title of official restaurant of the Italian pavilion at this year's **Expo** (<http://www.thedaily meal.com/free-tagging-cuisine/milan-expo>).



Expo 2015 / Daniele Mascolo

The outside of the Italy Pavilion at Expo Milano 2015, this year's world festival focused entirely on food.

Interestingly, despite Chef Vigotti's often leaning towards creative cuisine, the menu of Peck a Palazzo Italia (Peck's Expo location) is a quite different then what you might find at Peck's home location near **Milan** (<http://www.thedailydeal.com/news/travel/world-s-largest-vertical-farm-and-more-amazing-exhibits-year-s-world-s-fair/030915>)'s city center.

At the Expo, the menu needed to represent all of the regions of Italy and does not necessarily reflect Chef Vigotti's personal cooking style as strongly. Chef Vigotti told The Daily Meal, "My cuisine, [my] kitchen, is much more innovative than [at] Expo. Obviously, here we need to represent the Italian pavilion, much more classic and traditional." However, Chef Vigotti did have some opportunities to experiment at Expo. His favorite dish on the Expo menu is Spaghetti all'Amatriciana, which is traditionally made with pork but boasts fresh **octopus** (<http://www.thedailydeal.com/recipes/grilled-octopus-lemon-and-olive-oil-recipe>)in Vigotti's version.

Regardless of whether you try Chef Vigotti's more traditional Expo menu at Peck a Palazzo Italia or visit the gourmet shop and Ristorante Al Peck for a meal with more of a twist, you'll be delighted by great food made with the very best **fresh ingredients** (<http://www.thedailydeal.com/video/cook-pro-using-your-fresh-ingredients-kitchen>)Italy has to offer. Whatever he's cooking, traditional or innovative, Matteo Vigotti is definitely a chef worth watching.

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