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## **CHEF MIKE ISABELLA PLANS TO OPEN A SECOND LOCATION OF GRAFFIATO IN RICHMOND, VA THIS SPRING**

**RICHMOND, VA – February 3, 2014** – Washington, D.C. restaurateur and Top Chef All-Stars Runner-Up, Mike Isabella, announces plans to open a second location of his popular, Italian-inspired spot, Graffiato, in Richmond, Virginia this spring. The 6,700 square foot space is located at 123 W. Broad St., formerly Popkin Tavern. The building is a Richmond icon, serving as a furniture showroom as far back as 1909. Isabella plans to update the interior and add a wood-burning oven while maintaining the integrity of the space. Graffiato Richmond is expected to open this spring.

“It’s an exciting time to become part of the Richmond dining scene,” said chef/owner, Mike Isabella. “I can’t wait to bring Graffiato to Virginia’s capital. The location on Broad Street will make the restaurant accessible to college students and everyone downtown, and the building itself has so much history. When I saw the corner space with high ceilings and big picture windows, I knew this was the place to put Graffiato.”

In addition to giving the space a makeover to maximize seating and add Graffiato’s unique, industrial branding with graffiti, Isabella will install a wood-burning oven to accommodate the pizza and wood-oven sections of the menu. The Graffiato Richmond menu will include staples like handmade pasta, oven-roasted vegetables and an array of pizzas. The menu will also reflect what is local and in-season, and its location in the Shenandoah Valley will influence the type of products that can be sourced from local farms.

Similar to its D.C. location, the beverage program will feature beer and Prosecco on tap and a wine list with both domestic and global selections, including varietals from Virginia. Taha Ismail, beverage director for all of Isabella’s restaurants, will also oversee the craft cocktail program at Graffiato Richmond.

Travis Croxton, owner of Rappahannock Oyster Co., and Hilda Staples, partner in Graffiato D.C., have partnered with Isabella on this project.

### **About Graffiato**

Opened in the Chinatown neighborhood of Washington, D.C. in 2011, Graffiato is the first restaurant from Chef Mike Isabella. The Italian-inspired spot, serves seasonal, artisanal small plates, and handmade pastas and pizzas inspired by Isabella’s upbringing in an New Jersey Italian family. With heavy influence from his Latin and Mediterranean culinary training, Graffiato is anything but a traditional Italian eatery.

### **About Chef Mike Isabella**

Mike Isabella is the chef/owner of Graffiato, Kapnos and G in Washington, D.C. In fall 2014, he plans to open Kapnos Taverna in Arlington, VA. He is the author of *Mike Isabella’s Crazy Good Italian*, and in 2012 he was named *FOOD & WINE* magazine’s The People’s Best New Chef Mid-Atlantic. Before opening Graffiato, Isabella was the executive chef of José Andrés’ Zaytinya. Previously, Isabella worked under Marcus Samuelsson, Jose Garces and a host of other notable chefs and restaurateurs. Outside the kitchen, Isabella appeared on Season Six of *Top Chef*, and he was the runner-up on *Top Chef All-Stars*.

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