

Are You Sure We're Not In Italy?

By Katelynn Budzich



Photo Credit:
<https://vaccarospastry.com/>

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"Testimonials"

Most families have traditional recipes that everyone craves. These are the recipes that have been passed down from generation to generation. Usually, the recipe card is scribbled with ingredients and directions in cursive handwriting, and the stains of egg whites or splashes from milk carry memories of family mealtimes. Leaving parents and siblings behind when moving to college, whether you are only a few miles away or from a different state, is difficult. Your grandmother's favorite lasagna, pierogis, strudel, or fried chicken will always remind you of home. But don't fret, because there is an amazing bakery in Baltimore that will make you feel like you are in an Italian grandmother's kitchen enjoying classic pastries and desserts.



One of Vaccaro's Colosseo Sundaes

Photo Credit: <https://vaccarospastry.com/>

Every time I asked friends from Baltimore I met at Loyola, teachers, and even Uber drivers about their favorite place to eat homemade sweets, they told me I had to check out Vaccaro's Italian Pastry Shop. Eager and hungry, I made the trip to Little Italy close to the Inner Harbor, where I entered into this drool-worthy Italian bakery. What I found did not disappoint, because they served me huge portions that could have easily been enough for dinner. Even Julie S. from Towson, MD, wrote, "Every restaurant in Little Italy totally understands when you pass up their dessert because you tell them you're walking to Vaccaro's" ("Testimonials").

THE BAKERY

For me, this old-school Italian bakery gets an A-plus. The outside is covered in red bricks making you feel like you are walking the cobblestone streets in Italy. When you walk through the door, the bold aroma of coffee wakes your senses as the inside is busy with people sipping cappuccinos. The buttery smell of pastries is so mouthwatering it is no surprise to see people scraping their plates to savor every last bite. The display cases overflow with cannolis, éclairs, sfogliatelle, traditional Italian cookies, and no shortage of gelato flavors. Although all is delectable, you can't leave if you haven't stuffed yourself with one of their sundaes—in particular the Baci Ball. Three light and airy cream puffs get filled with chocolate hazelnut gelato. If that is not enough sugar, it becomes drenched in silky hot fudge and topped fluffy whipped cream.

Many students have ventured to Vaccaro's in Little Italy, even my friend Nicole, Loyola '19, who exclaimed, "The cannolis are so good they remind me of being back home in New Jersey."

However, don't let the name of the bakery fool you, because this bakery also serves breakfast sandwiches, hot panini, a long list of sandwiches, and salads all with Italian ingredients. So, whether you are hungry for something sweet or savory, you can go to Vaccaro's Italian Pastry Shop and order exactly what you are craving.

THE HISTORY

Established in 1956, "Gioacchino Vaccaro... brought with him the recipes and the knowledge of how to make the finest Siciliano pastries Baltimore had ever seen" ("About"). Now, sixty-one years later, the bakery must be doing something right because Maryland is lucky enough to have four locations, meaning you should have no problem getting to one. The main bakery is located in the heart of Little Italy, close to the Inner Harbor. The other shops are in Canton, Hunt Valley, and Bel Air. Everything there is irresistibly delicious as well. But don't only take my word for it—my friend Garrett Hass, '21, declared, "My Great Uncle lives in the city and is friends with the owner so he would go there a lot and whenever he visited he would bring pastries over, and they truly are amazing." So whichever location is closest to you, grab your friends and enjoy the delectable Italian pastries, because on Fridays



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They are open until midnight and no plane ticket to Sicily is required.

My belief when choosing a college is that if you do not go away to school in search of the best food, then it should definitely be the second reason. And if you go by the cliché quote, "desserts is stressed spelled backwards," then you will definitely want to go to Vaccaro's Italian Pastry Shop during exam week when your stress levels are high to get that chocolate fix your philosophy textbook won't give you.



Photo Credit: <https://vaccarospastry.com/>

"The cannolis are so good they remind me of being back home in New Jersey,"
Nicole Dibre '19.



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"About." Vaccaro's Italian Pastry Shop, <https://vaccarospastry.com/about.vaccaros/>. 26 Feb. 2018.

"Testimonials." Vaccaro's Italian Pastry Shop, <https://vaccarospastry.com/testimonials-social-media/>. 26 Feb. 2018.