



Mt. Shuksan.  
Photo by Grant Gunderson

## GLACIER, WA

### Milano's

Unlike most access points where wood-fired pizza masquerades as haute cuisine, the tiny hamlet of Glacier hosts a fine dining departure far from brewpub fare. Here, 20 highway minutes from the quick-hit Mt. Baker backcountry, the hungry who hike for turns are treated to a culinary experience spiced with Italian flair at Milano's.

Home to an open atmosphere and authentic menu, this inviting stop next to the Glacier Ski Shop has been exuding garlic, serving fresh *al dente* pasta and pouring fine Italian wine for 15 seasons. Chef Tom Debari—a transplanted skier with Long Island heritage—opened the doors in 1990 with his wife Jeannie as a way to spice up the local culinary landscape and escape chronic underemployment in Glacier. The eatery evolved from a deli to a dinner spot, but has retained its informal character and unpretentious décor, a mix that makes it a dinner-hour favorite for everyone from hoodie-clad huckers to soft-shelled city folk.

The traditional menu—with entrees ranging from 10 to 20 bucks—combines classic Italian pastas, seasonal weekly specials,



Photo by John C. DeBari

fresh-baked focaccia, signature risottos and an all-Italian wine list. The meals are served up by a 14-strong staff of snowboarders and skiers—including Tom's regular touring partner Jimmy Breitenstein—who are just as

likely to talk conditions and sample the stellar local backcountry as the clientele. Serving as a first-class neighborhood eatery but also nourishing the on-hill community with a homestyle dynamic, the Debari dining room has earned lasting affection for bringing the faithful together to celebrate after every deep day at Baker.

—Dan Kostrzewski

**Specialty:** *Pasta Tuscano or seafood linguine with a bottle of Nebbiolo.*

**Location:** *On Route 542 next to Glacier Ski Shop.*