

About Fortezza Ristorante

Fortezza Ristorante is a Northern Italian restaurant and steakhouse in Niwot, Colorado—but for owners Adam and Natalie Moore, it's also a homecoming. The couple grew up in nearby Longmont, met while bartending just three miles from where the restaurant now stands, and spent years working toward a shared dream: bringing the food, wine, and hospitality traditions of Northern Italy to the Colorado community that raised them.

Adam spent a decade as general manager of Michelin-recommended Barolo Grill in Denver, where he met Fortezza Executive Chef Egan Ma, and has traveled to Northern Italy more than a dozen times, visiting producers, touring wine country, and immersing himself in the culinary and service traditions that now shape Fortezza. Natalie brings a background in both education and hospitality throughout the Front Range (including at Barolo Grill alongside Adam), pairing operational expertise with the same thoughtful approach to guest experience that defines the restaurant.

Fortezza is Italian for inner strength, fortitude, and the courage to follow your dreams. Adam and Chef Egan shared mutual interest in one day opening their own restaurant in Northern Colorado. When the first space fell through, Adam tracked down the owners of a deserted restaurant with a beautiful sunken garden patio and no lease sign in sight. Within months, it was theirs. That same tenacity shows up in everything from the wine cellar built into an old closet to a menu that refuses to take shortcuts. Natalie said goodbye to teaching and joined forces to create the perfect place for their next venture.

Together, the three built Fortezza, which opened in August 2025, around a simple philosophy: genuine hospitality, uncompromising quality, and doing things the right way.

That philosophy is reflected throughout the menu. Inspired by the traditions of Northern Italy, the cuisine emphasizes exceptional ingredients, careful technique, and the French and Central European influences that distinguish the region from the Italian-American fare many diners know best. Fortezza focuses on preservation methods that extend the life of hyper-seasonal ingredients.

Nearly everything is made in-house, from fresh pasta to a 28-hour fermented focaccia that's served year-round. Seasonal menus change every two months, while signature dishes have included **Ricciola Crudo** with puffed sorghum; **housemade milk bread**; and **Hudson Valley Duck** with fermented cherry jus—a reflection of the kitchen's growing interest in fermentation and traditional culinary techniques. Current seasonal menu items include **Panissa y Parmigiano Reggiano** chickpea fritter with parmigiano reggiano espuma; **Risotto al Gambari** with acquerello rice, confit shrimp, smoked butter, kumquat agrodolce; and **Lumache al Pesto** with spring pesto, pistachio, lemon zest, fiore sardo pecorino.

Fortezza partners with nearby producers whenever possible, including Esoterra Culinary Garden for produce, Cheese Importers in Longmont for cured meats and cheeses, Callicrate Beef for American Wagyu, Dry Storage for grains and flour, and herbs grown in on-site planter boxes tended by Slow Food Boulder County. Most ingredients travel fewer than 20 miles before reaching the kitchen.

The wine program reflects the restaurant's deep connection to Northern Italy. Already recognized with a Wine Spectator Award of Excellence, the list is approximately 90% Northern Italian, representing nearly every region between Rome and the Alps. Guests can enjoy rare and premium bottles by the glass through the restaurant's Coravin system, and Fortezza's unique retail liquor license allows diners to purchase wine bottles to take home. The cocktail program showcases Italian spirits, amari, and herbs grown in Fortezza's own garden.

Beyond the dining room, Adam and Natalie remain deeply invested in the community that helped shape them, financially supporting organizations including Niwot High School, Best Buddies, the Left Hand Valley Courier, Niwot Business Association and Niwot Cultural Arts Association. For them, Fortezza isn't simply a restaurant—it's an opportunity to give back to the place they've always called home.