MARIO'S SUNSET CATCH
101 N. Riverside Drive, Pompano
Open 4–10 p.m. daily, 'till 11 p.m. Fri. & Sat.
Happy hour 4-7 p.m.
Live music Thursdays with a Studio 54 Tribute Band once a month
(954) 545-0901 or visit www.sunsetcatch.com

Far left: Black Ink Fettuccine Tre Pesce
Near Left: Octopus & Conch Ceviche
Below: Interior Pescatore Dinning Room of Mario's Sunset Catch

The view from Mario's Sunset Catch Terrazzo overlooking the Intracoastal Waterway

Mario's Sunset Catch Lobster BLT

SUNSET CATCH

Superb sunsets with Palermo-inspired seafood await you at Sunset Catch

BY RANDI AILEEN PRESS DINING DUCHESS™

Few seafood restaurants are as sexy as Mario Spina's Sunset Catch. Perched above the Marina at the Sands Harbor in east Pompano Beach, the Sunset Catch's interior Pescatore Dining room and Lounge is decorated with beautiful blue stained glass, sheer curtains hanging from the ceiling and white wall murals that look like ocean waves and sand. The fresh fish displays and live lobster tank together with the panoramas of the waterways gives an overall chic but casual feeling. And if you enjoy dining outside, the Terrazzo overlooking the Intracostal Waterway seats up to 50 persons and is superb at this time of year!

Mario's Sunset Catch concept is based on his roots from the seaport town of Palermo on Sicily's Northern coast. A gastronomically rich culture, Palermo is renowned for its fresh fish, locally grown vegetables and herbs, and meats sold daily in the local food markets. Each meal is prepared with a taste of Palermo.

Begin with the Burrata, a fresh Italian cheese made from mozzarella and cream. It is velvety with sweet milky flavor, served with sautéed broccoli rabe and garlic. If you love mussels the chef prepares the plump black Mediterranean variety in either a fra diavolo or white wine garlic sauce. For those who crave spicy, go with the fra diavolo. There are large pieces of tomatoes in the presentation and while zesty it isn't too fiery. And you'll be dipping your freshly baked bread into the remaining sauce after you've eaten the mussels! If you enjoy ceviche, theirs includes octopus and conch served citrus style with a hint of lemon, cilantro, chopped onions and tomatoes.

Fra diavolo whole lobster

For entrees, the Branzino (a European Seabass) is butterflied, deboned and served with baby Portobello mushrooms in a port wine reduction. Moist and delectable! I found the most tempting item on the menu to be the golden crab fettuccini. Although this selection is rich, you'll want to share an order rather than pass it up. The golden crab comes from the deep, cold waters of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Ocean, and is named for the creamy-beige color of their shell. The meat is sweet and delicate.

If you aren't in a seafood mood when you visit Mario's Sunset Catch, the menu includes grilled New Zealand Lamb and New York Strip. The truffle oil French fries are crispy and incredible, so ask for those as a side!

Leave room for dessert. The limoncello, imported from Italy, is a lemon liqueur served gelato style in a flute glass. It's sweet and creamy. The homemade Cannoli was my favorite. The crust was light yet crunchy and the filling soft and rich. One is perfect but you will long for another.

And if you happen to catch Winterfest Boat Parade fever, Sunset Catch provides the perfect viewing venue. For $99 per person, you can enjoy the passing flotilla Sudnay, Dec. 8, along with a five-course, family style meal. Call for reservations. ■