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# il Buco

## *Chef Ignacio Mattos*

Executive Chef, Ignacio Mattos joined il Buco in March 2006.

At just 28 years of age, Ignacio's kitchen reflects a commitment to honoring the simplicity of the prime ingredients highlighted by intense, full flavors - a perfect complement to the il Buco philosophy.

Ignacio was born in Santa Lucia, Uruguay. He gained his first cooking experience in his Italian grandmother's kitchen, full of savory flavors from the family farm. In his first year of culinary school Ignacio was recruited to do an internship with Michel Kerever, the mentor of Alain Passard, and never turned back.

In 1997 Argentine Chef Francis Mallmann whisked him out of culinary school to join him in the Mediterranean kitchen of his seaside restaurant, **Los Negros** in Jose Ignacio, just north of Punta del Este, Uruguay, the South American "Riviera." He then continued on to **Francis Mallmann 1884**, Mallmann's restaurant in the historic Bodega Escorihuela winery in Mendoza, Argentina. For the next several years he would join Mallmann in various ventures in Latin America and the U.S., including **Figueira Rubaiyat**, in Sao Paolo, where he began as Sous Chef and later became the Executive Chef.

In 2001, Ignacio made his way north to San Francisco to do a "stage" at Judy Roger's James Beard Award winning restaurant, **Zuni Café**, where he was deeply impressed by the quality of ingredients used in the simplest, flavorful combinations. He took that experience back east to assist Francis Mallmann in opening **Patagonia West**, his only US location at the time. He then returned to Argentina as Chef de Cuisine at Mallmann's **Patagonia Sur** in Buenos Aires.

At the end of 2002 Ignacio took a culinary trip, cooking and eating his way through Italy and Spain to expand his experience. He worked in several kitchens including **Martin Berasategui** a 3-Star Michelin rated restaurant in Lasarte-Oria, Spain and **il Cesare** in Albaretto de Latorre, Italy. Upon his return he continued to work with Mallmann in both New York and Argentina.

In the winter of 2004, while serving Alice Waters' (Chez Panisse) partner at Patagonia Sur, Ignacio was recruited to work with them in San Francisco. Working in **Chez Panisse's** downstairs kitchen for one year, Ignacio had the opportunity to work with the finest ingredients, expand his own perspective, and nurture his own vision.

His desire to return to the east coast in his own right brought him to the **Spotted Pig** in New York, where he was first introduced to il Buco. Here he sources ingredients both locally and in Italy with Donna Lennard (owner) furthering his vision of simple, clean preparations utilizing the finest ingredients from sustainable farms.

Ignacio has participated in cooking demonstrations at the Institute for Culinary Education (ICE), De Gustibus, and the New School. He has cooked at the James Beard Foundation two times and has participated in numerous food events in and around New York City.