



Autogrill launches the first motorway Bistrot: innovation and Italian tradition come together

- In its Bistrot Fiorenzuola d' Arda, the Group showcases Italian excellences selected in collaboration with the University of Gastronomic Science in Pollenzo (UNISG)

Milan, 5 April 2016 - Autogrill opens for the first time in the motorway channel its **Bistrot** concept, which was developed in collaboration with the **University of Gastronomic Science** (UNISG) in Pollenzo and reflects the evolution of food culture by privileging **local Italian products** and the recovery of **craft techniques**.

Company's CEO Gianmario Tondato Da Ruos presented the project today at an event in the renovated Fiorenzuola d'Arda service area attended by the Vice-minister for Agriculture, Food and Forestry, Senator Andrea Olivero, and representatives of the University of Gastronomic Science (UNISG).

This point of sale will thus become an exponent of a **new food culture** – travelling but not only – and of Autogrill's sharpening focus on its consumers' changing needs and eating styles to offer travellers a quality break.

The new Bistrot is in the Arda service area in Fiorenzuola d'Arda (Piacenza) on the **A1** Turin-Piacenza-Brescia motorway, where two major flows of travellers and two important culinary traditions, those of **Piacenza** and **Parma**, meet.

The Bistrot devotes much space to select local produce, and in-season and short supply chain items in particular, thus offering customers a unique experience that brings together the flavours of local culinary traditions, at affordable prices, and the values of sustainability.

"I'm very happy to take part in this event in which Autogrill and the University of Gastronomic Science in Pollenzo join forces to pay tribute to our country's food culture. For tourists and daily travellers, this location is a showcase for culinary specialities scrupulously preserved all over Italy and an excellent visiting card for our inestimable heritage of food production and cooking," said **Senator Andrea Olivero, Vice-minister for Agriculture, Food and Forestry**.

"With the opening of the Bistrot Fiorenzuola d' Arda we are going back to the roots of our history to look to the future, a future in line with the course Autogrill has set itself, driven by innovation and excellence through the constant transformation of its offering," said **Group CEO Gianmario Tondato Da Ruos**. *"Drawing on Bistrot's success in Europe,"* Tondato continued, *"we are now taking a new step forward by introducing this brand for the first time on the Italian motorway network and enabling motorists to get to know the excellent products of an area with a great wealth of farming and food traditions"* .



*“It is a cause of great satisfaction for the University of Gastronomic Science to be continuing this well consolidated research and innovation project with Autogrill,” commented **UNISG president Carlo Petrini**. “The Bistrot model, having renewed the idea of foodservice at Milan’s Stazione Centrale, is now debuting on the motorway and establishing strong bonds with the surrounding territory to leverage the quality and freshness of local produce.”*

Characterized by an interior layout evoking the atmosphere typical of **covered markets in cities**, the Bistrot Fiorenzuola d’ Arda is an eclectic place in which high quality goes hand in hand with the concepts of naturalness, in-season and local supply and respect for the life cycle of the products. The point of sale promotes a vision that emphasizes continuity between production and consumption, with innovative in-store communication that provides customers with the faces, backgrounds and characteristics of the main suppliers.

The renovation of the Arda location has changed both the lateral pillars, by which travellers enter, and the bridge level.

The offering on the ground floor includes a bakery (**Il Forno**) which has its work area visible to customers and features a wide assortment of pizzas, numerous types of bread made with sourdough and local cakes and pastries, such as the typical **Torta di Vigolo** (from Pasticceria Perazzi, a long established firm in the province of Piacenza), a **Caffetteria**, where genuine Neapolitan coffee made in the traditional “cuccuma” can be enjoyed, and a fresh fruit & veg area (**Il Frutteto**) which prepares a generous choice of centrifuged juices, fresh smoothies and fruit salads.

On the upper level (on the bridge over the motorway), on the other hand, travellers can try 1st course specialities from **Il Pastaio**, which, in full view of the customers, produces a variety of fresh pasta (bronze-drawn) using flours from **I Molini di Voghera**; street food style 2nd courses at **Cucine di Strada**, which has a barbecue grill for meat (from **Azienda Agricola Morini**, just 20 km from Fiorenzuola, for example); and cold dishes and salads from the delicatessen (**La Gastronomia**).

The new Bistrot Fiorenzuola d’ Arda is expected to see around 1.90 million **customers** in the next 12 months.

To satisfy their needs, around **600,000 rolls and pizzas** will be produced, some **6,300 kg of coffee** will be used and **12,300 kg of pasta** will be served in the coming year.

The new service area employs **100 people** on a stable basis and may reach **150** during seasonal peaks.

To support the project Autogrill launched a major personnel training programme (with over 3,000 hours of training) making it possible to give the point of sale new professional figures and trades, such as bakers, in line with Bistrot’s offering and philosophy.

The offering is rounded out by a number of market points featuring select high quality products from local producers, such as vinegar from Acetaia Bellei, which has a history of over 600 years.



Comunicato stampa



A success then, as borne out by Bistrot operations in five countries in Europe - Italy, The Netherlands, Switzerland, Germany and Finland - in seven cities: Milan, Rome, Helsinki, Düsseldorf, Geneva, Utrecht and now Arda. Plus the two cities where Bistrot will shortly be opening: Montreal and Frankfurt.

Autogrill and Fiorenzuola d' Arda

The Fiorenzuola d'Arda location was the **first bridge type** motorway diner to be built **in Europe, in 1959** and is still one of the most eloquent icons of Italy's modernization and economic boom, thus reflecting growth in the country over the last five decades and the habits of generations of Italians travelling on the "Autostrada del Sole". The man behind the project that so impressed the nation at the time was the architect **Angelo Bianchetti**, who in 1949 started working with **Mario Pavesi**, the Novara businessman who opened the first real foodservice area for motorists on the Milano-Torino motorway, thereby "inventing" the model for all the "Autogrills" that were to open in subsequent decades. Fiorenzuola d'Arda's concrete and steel structure, with entrances on both sides of the motorway, by stairways and lifts, and a windowed gallery restaurant, was designed to ensure maximum accessibility and functionality for travellers. The project became the **prototype for subsequent bridge-type foodservice locations**. The idea arose during a trip to the United States, where these buildings had already been in use for some years. Mario Pavesi too drew inspiration for his motorway diner when he was in the United States in the previous decade, naming it after the *grill rooms* (small restaurants) along America's interstate routes. Pavesi's American experience also influenced his gastronomic approach, underpinning a veritable "Motorist's Menu" specially developed by the University of Milan's Physiology Institute and based on nutritious but light dishes enabling drivers to stay alert at the wheel. Over the years Fiorenzuola d' Arda became a great favourite with travellers and one of the most popular in the Autogrill network. The structure and the offering have undergone various upgradings and changes in line with trends, consumers' needs and the country's growth in general. In 2012, Autogrill's Fiorenzuola d' Arda location was one of six of the Group's points of sale involved in "Territorio - Piacenza", a project in collaboration with the provincial authority and Piacenza Alimentare, a consortium promoting local products, to strengthen its relationship with this part of the country.

All the materials in the press folder are available on the website www.autogrill.com via the following link:

<http://www.autogrill.com/it/our-way/progetti-speciali-bistrot-fiorenzuola-arda>

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