

DINING

Harry's is more than celebrity magnet for Taylor Swift, others, it's a father-son success



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Palm Beach Post

As Father's Day celebrates the love and guidance provided by our dads, there's no better time to share a story of a father's dream realized and his son's devotion to carrying it forward.

Meet Harry and Peter Poulakakos, the father and son behind Harry's who exemplify this spirit.

If the restaurant's name rings a bell, the West Palm Beach hot spot at [CityPlace](#) recently made global news as a downtown date-night dinner destination for [Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce](#).

The gents are also behind the adjacent Adrienne's Pizza Bar, named for Harry's late wife/Peter's mother; it's where this reporter always takes her visiting guests for its terrific egg-topped brunch pizza.



Harry's Bar in West Palm: Honoring the past, building the future

Harilos “Harry” Poulakakos arrived in the United States from Sparta, Greece, in 1956 with little more than a dream and a relentless work ethic. After years of bartending, and with \$55,000 in savings, he opened Harry’s at Hanover Square in 1972, in Manhattan’s Financial District. It quickly became Wall Street’s power lunching scene, attracting boldface personalities from the legal and financial sectors.

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Five decades later, Harry arrived in Florida to retire, not open a restaurant.

But sometimes plans change.

“An architect showed Peter around. In a few weeks, retirement was over,” Harry recalled with a smile.

Now 87, a dapper Harry still dons a suit and tie daily, claiming he never sweats thanks to the Atlantic breezes.

A legacy of hospitality and personality



Harry's was among the rare see-and-be-seen spots with great food and drink yet was equally renowned for the warm hospitality Harry showed the restaurant's patrons stopping at every table to personally greet his guests.

Peter Poulakakos grew up immersed in the world his father built. During school breaks from Brooklyn's Poly Prep, Peter worked at Harry's bussing tables, passing hors d'oeuvres at private parties and delivering food orders to offices in the neighborhood.

Inspired by his father's passion and values, Peter officially joined his dad at work in 1998 after graduating from Georgetown University. He cites the family-like camaraderie his dad created with longtime staff and customers as the reason he wanted to work there.

“It was a natural progression,” Peter said.

It was a lovely surprise for Harry, as he had thought Peter would take a more corporate career path.

When Adrienne died in 2003, Harry closed the original Hanover Square location. In 2006, Peter revived Harry’s and created 10 more concepts, earning him a “[restaurant titan](#)” title by The New York Times



Today, Peter leads HRH Hospitality across New York City and West Palm Beach, and it all started with Harry’s.

Life's lessons

In addition to pushing him to work hard, the best lesson Harry instilled in Peter is consistency and fairness with staff and customers.

“He said it’s okay to make a mistake because you can always go back and correct it,” said Peter.

And, in separate interviews, both said if you don’t make any mistakes, it means you’re not trying.

You’ll find three generations of the Poulakakos family celebrating June 15 at — where else?— Harry’s.



But like his dad, Peter wants his sons to be the “best examples of themselves they can be and work hard no matter what they eventually choose to do. It would be great if they end up in the restaurant business, but we’re not pushing that.”

Since opening this location two years ago, the duo delights in seeing familiar faces of all generations who graced the original New York City location and now call Palm Beach County home at least part of the year.

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Peter attributes this multi-generational appeal to the restaurant’s “casual luxury” core philosophy and timeless design.

“Easy and excellent is our slogan. We allocate a significant amount of our energy to catering to a younger clientele without alienating our older clientele. Everyone seems to be comfortable” Peter said.

Even in a somewhat loud environment.

“You can get a great steak here, a great piece of fish, you can share some awesome dishes, but it’s going to be one of the louder restaurants that’s geared toward having fun.”

Harry's: What to know



Address: 384 S. Rosemary Ave., West Palm Beach

Call: 561-834-5010

Web: harrysbarrestaurant.com

Hours: Brunch is served three days a year including Father's Day from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Specials are priced \$32 for lobster-stuffed mushrooms to \$44 for steak Benedict. Dinner that day runs 5 to 11:30 p.m. Main courses are priced \$28 for cacio e pepe to \$195 for a porterhouse serving two. The restaurant's signature Beef Wellington with black truffle sauce is \$85.

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Diana Biederman is the Palm Beach Post's new-ish food and restaurant writer. She ate at the original Harry's in 1989 when a long-ago ex was a summer associate at Stroock & Stroock & Lavan and it was his treat. If you have any news tips about the local dining scene, please send them to dbiederman@pbpost.com. Help support our journalism. [Subscribe today](#).