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**THE HOTEL BENJAMIN FRANKLIN HAS BEEN DARK FOR OVER FIVE YEARS. THIS SEASON ASTARIA RESTAURANT AND BAR LIGHTS UP DOWNTOWN WITH A LITTLE HOLIDAY CHEER**

**ASTARIA RESTAURANT AND BAR HAS CHOSEN TO TAKE THE LEAD IN SHIFTING THEIR CONCEPT IN RESPONSE TO THE CHALLENGING ECONOMIC TIMES.**

The Hotel has been vacant since Astaria first opened. For the twenty years prior, it was occupied solely by United Airlines for layover stays for flight attendants and pilots. Over the course of 5 years, there have been three owners and three proposed projects for the site. Most recently (2 years ago) the property was purchased by Citisuites, a Lembi Group entity. Soon after acquiring the property, complete renovations began to transform the 1927 Spanish revival Hotel into a 92 room contemporary boutique hotel. Unfortunately in May of 2008, construction was halted as a result of the challenges facing the financial market. Despite the dark hole this has thrust upon the upper east side of down town San Mateo , Astaria Restaurant and Bar finds itself embracing a concept that will enhance the neighborhood and give locals a bright spot in what has turned out to be a gloomy fall.

Astaria is moving forward despite the set-backs for the hotel. Since it is no secret that the economy has had an effect on dining and diners; Astaria has responded with a fresh concept that provides guests with an uptown look and feel in a comfortable downtown setting; offering comfort food, handcrafted cocktails, an award winning wine list and as always, gracious service.

Astaria's menu has been scaled down in price but not in flavor or selection. Robust California Fare focusing on sustainable ingredients from local purveyors.

Astaria is owned by two local business women, Eleni Lolas and Alicia Petrakis.

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