



Vaccaro's

TRATTORIA



Meet Raphael

In Akron, Ohio, the Vaccaro name has been synonymous with traditional Italian food (and award-winning pizza) since Frank and Angelina Vaccaro first opened Vaccaro's Pizza in 1965. In 2002, son Raphael took over the family-owned business and took traditional Italian to a whole new level, garnering many accolades along the way from the likes of Bon Appetit, Gourmet and Wine Spectator magazines, to name a few.

From an early age, Raphael knew that he wanted to be in the restaurant business. He discovered his passion while watching his parents cook, and he embraced the history, flavors, recipes and traditions that his mother had brought from Italy. So he became a fixture in his parents' restaurant, where he began working as a busboy at the age of 16.



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T R A T T O R I A

After earning a bachelor's degree in business management and marketing from The University of Akron, Raphael devoted himself to running every aspect of Vaccaro's Pizza, then at the original South Arlington Avenue location. His desire to create dishes for customers' enjoyment helped him to work his way up the ladder – no small feat in a family-owned business.

In 1995, faced with offers from a major business to buy the land on which Vaccaro's Pizza sat, Frank Vaccaro decided to open Vaccaro's Trattoria in its current Bath, Ohio, location. While trying to run both restaurants, Raphael felt the pressure of trying to maintain the high quality associated with Vaccaro's menu at the two separate locations and came to the conclusion that bigger is not always better.

Once Vaccaro's Pizza closed, Raphael concentrated on creating a new and vibrant menu at the Trattoria, while still bringing forward those standards and traditions set forth by his parents. And although pizza still is a staple on his menu, customers also can enjoy old-world traditional Italian food with a nouveau twist – items such as roasted duck ravioli, roasted mussel pasta and lasagna al carne. Raphael also placed emphasis on building an outstanding wine list, and under his guidance, his knowledgeable staff is adept at recommending a wine to perfectly compliment dinner. He also regularly hosts tasting dinners with renowned winemakers from around the world.

These nuances have earned the praises of Gourmet and Bon Appetit magazines (voted a Top 10 Restaurant in Ohio, December 2007); Restaurant Hospitality magazine (third place, International Wine List category, 2007); and Wine Spectator magazine (Award of Excellence, year).

In 2007, on the heels of the success of Vaccaro's Trattoria, Raphael began catering large events at the St. Thomas Banquet Hall (555 S. Cleveland-Massillon Road, Akron). He also is a restaurant consultant, which enables other start-up restaurateurs to tap the knowledge he has gained during his 25 years in the business.

Raphael resides in Akron with his wife and three daughters