

Beat: Lifestyle

THE MAESTRO FROM ABRUZZO - MAURIZIO DI CIANO

Maurizio the Culinary Gastronomer

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USPA NEWS - The amazing Western Australian Icon Maurizio Di Ciano who started his passion for Italian fine foods working the kitchens of Abruzzo at aged 10. This child prodigy soon become the personal Chef to the likes of Sean Connery, Madonna and Frank Sinatra whilst a teenager in London's Savoy Restaurant.

Imagine if you would for a few minutes a small boy earning an income whilst learning a trade at the age of 10 and his school friends are out fishing and asking parents for pocket money. Maurizio learnt from a very young age the importance of dedication, commitment and perseverance working in the kitchens of his hometown Abruzzo. Maurizio's family grew up in the small village of Lanciano. Established in the 8th Century formerly known as Ancient Anxanum, the city of the Frentanese, has contained for over twelve centuries the first and greatest Eucharistic Miracle of the Catholic Church but that's another story.

Imagine also a small village of monks, royalty and peasants creating fine foods and emperors' dishes over 2,000 years ago and having this family tradition and style of food preparation, dedication and passion handed to family members again and again to keep alive the tradition of Abruzzo delicacies. What an amazing history to begin your apprenticeship as a young boy preparing food who at the time had a life ambition at the time to own a brand new Vespa Motorcycle before he was 16.

I spent a day with this magnificent Maestro Chef as he shared some amazing stories of life's biggest teacher...hope and belief in yourself as well as others. "I believe that one day all of Australia will appreciate that when you dine at Maurizio's you will be tasting, smelling and visually appreciating thousands of years of tradition served to you with a smile. "Fast food is simply a petrol station for people", said Maurizio who went on to say "good food gives you quality of life, watch what goes into your body. I believe in reaching out your senses of smell, sight, taste and your body knowing what you have eaten is soul food. I want my customers experience to be global, I want people to savour the tradition and centuries of love and dedication that has gone into every mouthful of my food".

Maurizio's father was a builder in Italy and wanted more for his son and always encouraged him to learn, experience and develop his own passion from the scenery and life around him. Sending Maurizio to be trained exclusively in Italy at Villa Santa-Maria where he gained his experience working in throughout the best restaurants of Italy, Switzerland and London.

Maurizio's big break from the kitchen at the Savoy in the mid 80's where he was one of Eighty kitchen staff happened when he decided to break rules and make a patron happy.

"I heard the waiter argue with the Sous Chef when a customer wanted more vegetables, whilst they argued too long I cooked up some Italian Vegetables and served the patron, by the time the argument finished and the waiter returned to the patron he was shocked to find he was happy and had plenty of vegetables. The next morning the Executive Chef called me to the office where I thought the worst but he explained that what I did was right and I am to be promoted from the kitchen doing minor work and moved to table chef serving clients such as Frank Sinatra, Sean Connery and Madonna. What a life changing experience for me." said Maurizio.

Returning home after a few years Maurizio worked in several leading 5 Star Hotels in Europe as maitre d' where in the early 90's Maurizio built one of the largest mobile catering trucks in the World 13 metres long and able to cater up to 1,000 meals an hour. This was fine Italian cuisine not fast food and after being contracted to 'Formula One Motor Racing' he toured Europe with his amazing Semi Trailer Kitchen following 'Formula One' to San Marino, Monaco, Monza, Imola and many more.

"To prepare over a thousand meals an hour for the Formula One management and teams three times a day was an amazing experience and I made sure I always employed local staff in every town I passed through. We were treated like Royalty with much respect always." said Maurizio. After a five year circuit I moved away from life on the road to work in Switzerland's resort town of Interlaken. Missing the sunshine a friend suggested he visit Perth where he came over on a work Visa. "Seeing so many opportunities I moved back to Interlaken, packed up and moved to Australia." said Maurizio.

I asked Maurizio how he motivates his staff. They are always smiling even when peeling and preparing some 6,000 tomatoes for saucing. "My staff are treated like family, Like my staff I would like to see more kitchen staff in Australia get back to the basics and

cook with pride and passion, love your food show that love in what you prepare. Less the food blogger, TV Show Chef attitude from both sides of the kitchen . Earn your stripes and wear them with pride. My staff learn from experience as experience cant be bought with a diploma." explained Maurizio.

As we spoke he prepared a succulent aromatic dish he called "Pistachio Rack of Lamb". Very much the Abruzzo traditional meal with his own personal twist brushed with truffle, mustard, crushed pistachio herbs and bread crumbs served with lentils, tomato, basil with a coulis of sweet peppers and served on a blue glass plate to contrast the reds . Maurizio describes this dish as " One of my creations inspired through combining all your senses of smell , sight , taste , sound and touch."

Staff loyalty and happiness here at 'Maurizios Restaurant 'makes you wonder why some restaurateurs don't learn from this man of experience. Maurizio Events Catering provides Perth with a highly refined service that designs menus to suit clients´ and thats really important in todays corporate society that at times tries to compare 'World Renowned dishes' with the price of fast foods . His expert team of skilled chefs, wait staff and hostesses ensure that their objective of maximum professionalism is at all times maintained. Compare oranges with oranges I say . This Iconic Italian Perth Restaurant needs to be on your bucket list.

Rachael Ray once said , "Good food and a warm kitchen are what makes a house a home. I always tried to make my home like my mother's, because Mom was magnificent at stretching a buck when it came to decorating and food. Like a true Italian, she valued beautification in every area of her life, and I try to do the same." Maurizio has indeed kept the true tradition of thousands of years of home cooking refined to let you experience a true Italian degustation.... Namaste

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