

Business

East Hampton restaurant celebrating 20th anniversary this weekend

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EAST HAMPTON — While more and more businesses are losing the fight against the current economy and have no choice but to downsize or shut down, Rossini's Italian Restaurant have continued to thrive and is celebrating its 20th anniversary this weekend.

Dating back to 1991, the family-owned eatery, known for its pizza and homemade dishes, has set out to include the community in its celebration of two decades of business in the town.

Rossini's host and son of one of the owners, Angelo Simoni Jr., said the restaurant will celebrate its anniversary with special appetizers and entrees, free cannolis and a free glass of wine to all who dine in.

"We've made lifelong friends with many of our customers," Simoni Jr. said. "We've been part of high school graduations, confirmations and unions."

Now it wants to thank them for being so supportive.

All three owners — Angelo, Mario and Luigi Simoni — worked "very hard" to get the restaurant to where it is today, Simoni Jr. said. Before they opened Rossini's, the brothers ran two other eateries in Wallingford and Cheshire.

"We have a very loyal customer base," Simoni Jr. said. "We have customers that have followed us from Cheshire."

And just as customers have stuck by their side, when some relocate, the restaurant, upon request, sends them dry ice pizza.

"This way they can heat the pizza up and have Rossini's whenever they want," Simoni Jr. said.

On any given Thursday, Friday or Saturday after 5 p.m., customers who order take-out often find themselves waiting almost 70 minutes for pizza, "because the food is that good," Simoni Jr. adds.

Though the staff of about 25 is made up of a host of cousins, the few people who aren't relatives have been around for 10-plus years and have pretty much become an extension to the family, Simoni Jr. said, which explains why there's not much turnover.

Customers also rave about Rossini's customer service.

During Tropical Storm Irene, for example, Rossini's stayed open with the help of two back-up generators to provide food to hungry residents and Connecticut Light & Power employees, Simoni Jr. said.

"One customer said that if we had showers, they would stay," he said.

Rossini's has become a second home to many East Hampton residents. With the help of the staff, the three chefs make changes to the menu every six months so they can always keep their customers on their toes, Simoni Jr. said.

Rossini's is located at 62 West High St. For more information, visit rossiniseasthampton.com or check out their Facebook page by searching "Rossini's Pizza and Restaurant."

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