



Villa Di Manno Bakery's Rob Mendicino, vice president, and Joe Di Manno, president.

From traditionally hearty breads to mouth-watering loaves enriched with nourishing ingredients, Villa Di Manno Bakery is the greatest thing since sliced bread.

Written By Simona Panetta

In all of its various forms and textures, bread has been hailed by countless cultures across the world as a highly respected source of nourishment. Emerging in the Neolithic era, rising from the depths of ancient Egyptian tombs, and playing a pivotal role in the Bible, bread is one of the world's oldest prepared foods. It represented life, sustenance in its simplest form. Today, its uses are infinite. Its purpose is a matter of taste, something to be enjoyed. Whether you like taking in the aroma or savouring its flavour, the presence of bread is always comforting. "Dipping a piece of Calabrese bread in some olive oil and balsamic, with a little bit of cheese and a glass of Amarone - it doesn't get any better than that," reveals Joe Di Manno.

Since his teenage years working in the family business, Joe has always loved bread - not just eating it, but selling it. Today, he is the president of Villa Di Manno Bakery, a full-service manufacturing and

DELICIOUS BREADS THAT RISE TO THE CHALLENGE

wholesale establishment that delivers its delicious products across southern Ontario and the U.S. With its wide variety of bread products and highly anticipated Omega 3-enriched loaf made with seed flour, Villa Di Manno is a family operated business that is run on passion and a deep understanding of the food industry.

"We produce fresh, daily artisanal bread products that include *focacci*, *panini*, hoagie buns and dinner rolls," says Joe. "Our operation is flexible and capable enough to tailor our offerings to a customer's particular needs. So if you want to order a low-fat, gluten-free loaf, we can do that, and if you want a burger bun made with malt flour and dipped in potato flakes, we've done that," adds Joe proudly.

Ever since he could remember, Joe has been submerged in the art of sacrifice. His parents, Benny and Irma, founded Di Manno Bakery in 1979, a place where the teachings of quality and the value of optimum customer service were unveiled to Joe. While his parents would plug in 18 hours daily, Joe would excitedly rush to the bakery after school and on the weekends to help out. "I spent my adolescence in that place. It was home to me," says Joe nostalgically.

As Joe grew in experience, so did the business, as he and his dad focused all

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– Rob Mendicino

their resources on the wholesale side, eventually moving into a 40,000 sq. ft. facility near highways 400 and 7. With state-of-the-art equipment and a more efficient production process in place, Villa Di Manno was born, churning out quality-made food products while delivering top-notch service. Looking for someone who could effectively manage the day-to-day responsibilities of a rapidly growing company, Joe enlisted



That’s why Villa has invested heavily into its plant, implementing a comprehensive food safety program which allows for the production of safe, consistent, quality food products.

Strong leadership has allowed for all these initiatives to take root and flourish. But in an evolving industry and more sophisticated marketplace, sometimes it’s better just to keep it simple. “At the end of the day, bread is bread,” says Joe. “It has to look good and taste good and be on time.” ©

the help of his childhood friend Rob Mendicino. “Everything we do starts with the customer,” says Rob, who is Villa’s vice president. “We make sure that they receive fresh, quality products on time, every day. It’s our mandate.”

In 1999, the Di Manno family suffered the loss of its patriarch, Benny, to colon cancer. His death left a hole in their hearts as well as the business. Impossible to replace, the family leaned heavily on the dedicated backs of their employees and forged ahead.

Nearly 10 years after Benny’s death, Joe is proud to have carried on his dad’s legacy. “We now produce thousands of bread products daily, managed from start to finish by our well-trained and devoted staff,” says Joe. “This allows Rob and I to look for ways to improve our facility, develop new products and generate new revenue streams, like our thaw-and-serve program being rolled out by our frozen division, and our new kosher program that caters to the Jewish and Muslim communities. It’s all about satisfying the customer.”



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Villa Di Manno Bakery’s state-of-the-art equipment delivers high-quality fare.

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