



ICCO Canada

Pentola d'Oro

Under The Stars





2020 ICCO Canada Pentola d'Oro - Under The Stars



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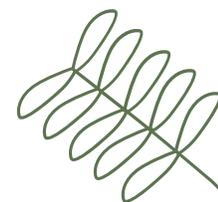
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Thank you to our sponsors



PDO & PGI

PDO and PGI products represent excellence in European food production. They are the result of a unique combination of human and environmental factors characteristic of a certain geographical area.

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TRUE ITALIAN TASTE

The True Italian Taste project is promoted and financed by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, carried out by Assocamerestero in collaboration with the Italian Chambers of Commerce abroad to strengthen and to protect the authentic Italian products. True Italian Taste is part of “The Extraordinary Italian Taste” program.

As part of this project, ICCO Canada has been working on various initiatives since 2016 to highlight the authenticity, traceability, quality control, and certifications of authentic Italian foods. The goal is to inform Canadian food lovers about how to identify an authentic Italian product, in order to make informed purchases and enjoy the unrivalled quality of genuine Italian products.

One of the many initiatives of the True Italian Taste program, which include seminars, masterclasses and tasting events, is the “Authentic Italian Table,” which celebrated its third edition this year. This year’s culinary offering was gourmet panini prepared with high quality Italian ingredients by renowned chefs.



DISCOVER
REAL ITALIAN COFFEE
IN ALL ITS FORMS



www.lavazza.ca

LAVAZZA

TORINO, ITALIA, 1895

Letter from ICCO Canada Co-Presidents, Tony Altomare and Pat Pelliccione

Distinguished Guests:

Welcome to the 8th edition of the **ICCO Canada Pentola d'Oro - Under the Stars**, which this year is brought to you in a unique online version in compliance with Covid-19 social distancing regulations.

Since the quarantine lockdown initiated in March, ICCO Canada has continued its business services and assisted its members and network of contacts, despite many challenges.

We are very grateful to all our supporters, who believed in our strength during this time, and our efforts to innovate our initiatives and programs.

This year we are combining the **ICCO-Canada Pentola d'Oro - Under the Stars** with the **True Italian Taste** program, which focuses on the promotion of authentic Italian products and is funded by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

On this occasion, ICCO Canada brings the business and culinary communities together again, at a time when the food and beverage industry in Ontario and internationally has been deeply affected by the pandemic.

For the eighth year in a row, we are proud to support the creativity and vision of those who have promoted and contributed to the Italian “culinary” lifestyle in Canada. This year our main focus will be the authentic Italian food and ingredients, combined with Canadian products and excellence, within the True Italian Taste program.

Tonight, we are pleased to extend our sincere congratulations to the recipients of this year's awards: **Gabriele Torchetti** of Lady York Foods, **Chef Massimo Capra**, **Joe Pulla** of Johnvince Group of Companies, **Salvatore Mele** of Oretta Ristorante and wine agents **Halpern Enterprises**. We would also like to congratulate **Anna Erba**, **Giacomo Erba** and **Andrea Copreni**, of Stelvio and Buono Restaurants, for being recognized by the ICCO-Canada for Innovation in Entrepreneurship.

Through their hard work, dedication and innovation, they were able to make a difference and improve the industry. That is why we are extremely pleased to celebrate their achievements tonight.

Our sincere gratitude goes to our main sponsor **Lavazza**, and to all this evening's sponsors. We are also extremely grateful to all our supporters and partners, who made this evening possible.

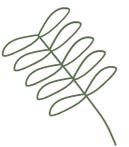
We extend a special thank you to the **ICCO Canada staff**, in particular its Executive Director **Corrado Paina**, for their continuous dedication and hard work.

We hope you enjoy this evening!

Sincerely,

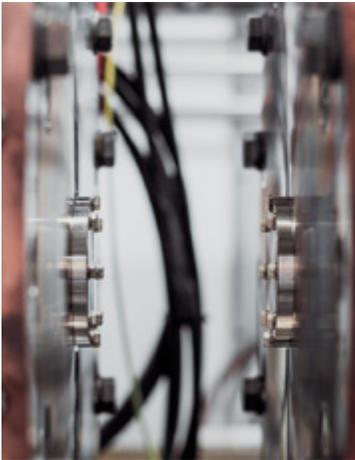
Tony Altomare

Pat Pelliccione



ITALIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF ONTARIO CANADA (ICCO CANADA)

SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN THE 1930S, AND RECOGNIZED OFFICIALLY IN 1961, THE ITALIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF ONTARIO CANADA (ICCO CANADA) HAS BEEN A FACILITATOR OF BUSINESS, A SEEKER OF INVESTMENT, AND A BUILDER OF COMMERCIAL RELATIONSHIPS. THE ICCO CANADA IS AN INDEPENDENT, NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION WHOSE AIM IS TO ENHANCE AND PROMOTE INVESTMENTS, BUSINESS, TRADE AND CULTURAL RELATIONS AMONG ITS MEMBERS AND NETWORK OF CONTACTS AS WELL AS TO FACILITATE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT WITHIN CANADIAN AND ITALIAN COMPANIES.



INNOVATION



DESIGN



FASHION



FOOD

Invitation to the Voyage

by ICCO Canada Executive Director Corrado Paina

There has always been a recurring theme of the courageous, thrilling journey of immigration from Italy: **an immense knowledge of food.**

Our fourth publication of “**Buon appetito Toronto!**” narrates the story of the flourishing expansion of avant-garde Italian importers and restaurateurs to the land of lakes.

This story is not going to end because of Covid-19, because it is the story of human beings, of tasting the creation of things and connecting our body to the outside, of sitting at a table and trying to explain the world.

Italian cuisine, which we are all keenly aware of, is the unfolding of complex feelings and dynamics. According to a famous phrase etched on an exterior airport building in Rome, “Italians are a people of saints, poets and sailors.”

In the food narrative, there’s faith, poetry and adventure.

To paraphrase Baudelaire, it is an invitation to the voyage. And **Italian food invites you to an unforgettable and never-ending trip.**

Throughout the years, Pentola d’Oro has only recognized a small part of those who are and have been at the vanguard of a legion that has filled the city, the GTA, the province of Ontario, and this country. All of these serve as outposts of food and wine, shelters of taste and reflection.

Tonight’s winners are an expression of a trend, of a way of life, of a belief that food must be flavourful, healthy and pleasurable, and it must be drizzled by a great olive oil and wed to a fantastic wine.

Pentola d’Oro combined the idea of integrity, tradition and innovation as set out by the owners and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, through the True Italian Taste project, and by the inner laws of well- living.

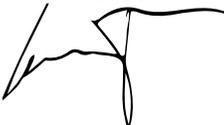
I salute the winners as well as all of those that imported the first Italian products, the little bottegai, the familiar small supermarket owners, the corner store entrepreneurs, the bakers, the ice cream makers in England, the banana sellers at the corners of Toronto’s main streets, the first staff members of New York’s fruit markets, the first Tuscan wine-makers in California. The list goes on. While they might not all have a name, Pentola d’Oro remembers their work and the roads that they have laid out.

Pentola d’Oro celebrates this kinship, in the name of Italian food and wine, in the name of good living.

ICCO Canada Pentola d’Oro – Under The Stars 2020 Winners:

Pentola d’Oro Award	Gabriele Torchetti, President, Lady York Foods
Italy-Canada Award	Chef Massimo Capra, Owner, Capra’s Kitchen
Lifetime Achievement Award	Joe Pulla, President, Johnvince Group of Companies
Innovative Entrepreneur Award	Salvatore Mele, Principal, Mele Group
Italian Wine Award	Halpern Enterprises

Corrado Paina



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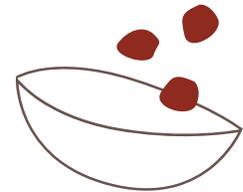
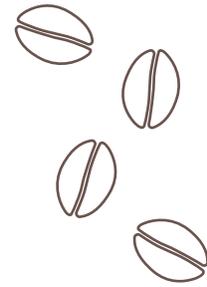




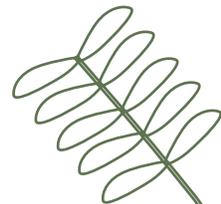
LAVAZZA CANADA'S INNOVATIVE RESPONSE TO COVID-19

By Rita Simonetta

Our daily lives have been radically transformed by Covid-19, and that also holds true for businesses, which have had to shift the way they conduct their operations. Lavazza Canada has met the challenge and is continuing to respond with forward-thinking solutions.



ANDREA CHIARAMELLO



“Covid-19 has forced us all to learn a new way of working, new tools and how to manage sudden change and quickly adapt to uncertain situations,”



explained **Andrea Chiamarello, Lavazza Canada's Vice President Sales Canada.** “We all had no choice but to evolve as an organization in order to handle the situation.”

In addition to responding to immediate concerns posed by the pandemic, Chiamarello said that Lavazza focused on three long-term priorities: **“protect our staff, protect their jobs and focus on building the future of our organization.”**

Beside quickly adapting to the new way of working (luckily working remotely and working from home were not unfamiliar terms at Lavazza, therefore, from a technical aspect we were already prepared), we focused our efforts on adapting our organization in order to make it stronger and more flexible to face the situation with the goal to be a better organization post-Covid-19.”

With this in mind, the iconic Italian coffee company zeroed in on one of its mainstays: exceptional employees. “We took the opportunity to bring on board additional talents to build a stronger food service team and create several new tools for our

customers, all activities which will play a critical role in rebuilding this channel which faced the hardest consequences of the pandemic” noted Chiamarello.

These were steps in the right direction, because just like any other business, the pandemic has had a clear impact on Lavazza, said Chiamarello. “From a revenue and sales perspective, the closure of dine-in food service establishments, travel restrictions and the change from office work to work-from-home arrangements created a significant shift of the coffee consumptions. From an operations perspective, Covid 19 significantly increased the complexity of all operations, such as logistics, supply chain and forecasting, also impacting the value chain of many companies by increasing the cost of doing business.”

In regards to the impact on distribution of Made-in-Italy products, Chiamarello pointed out that “there have been many operational challenges related mainly to supply chain and logistics, however, thanks to a great team, hard work and prompt decisions, we are able to minimize the risks and we made sure our products were always available to consumers.”

This dedication and perseverance will go a long way when it comes to the future of the food sector given the current situation.

“The food sector has always been and always will be a critical sector for the community: companies involved in food production, distribution and sales of food product play an essential role,” Chiamarello said.

“This is not going to change moving forward, in fact, there is no doubt that Covid-19 has highlighted the importance of this sector. Food service operators have put their best efforts toward evolving their organizations with new practices, services and technologies (online ordering, pickup and delivery, remote dinner experiences); I envision this evolution to continue even after Covid-19 is solved.”





MICHELLE JOBIN
Host | Spokesperson | Producer

THE ICCO CANADA PENTOLA D'ORO – UNDER THE STARS

EMCEE

Michelle Jobin is a television personality and spokesperson with almost two decades of experience in broadcast and online media.

Whether she's acting as a red carpet correspondent, fitness expert, brand spokesperson or weather specialist, Michelle has a gift for skillful storytelling.

After producing and hosting 54 episodes of Dining Toronto, Michelle has become a fixture in the city's food scene. In 2020, she and co-host Jasmine Baker launched Breaking Bread, a podcast that leverages their industry connections to delve into what's happening behind the scenes in Toronto's best kitchens. From social justice to new food trends—no topic is off the table on Breaking Bread.

Recently, Michelle has collaborated with brands such as Nintendo and Canada Takeout to help tell their stories.

For Nintendo, Michelle's husband and five-year-old son Archer helped her showcase the Ring Fit Adventure as an active, interactive game the whole family can enjoy. As the national spokesperson for Canada Takeout, Michelle became the trusted voice rallying Canadians to support local restaurants during the Covid-19 pandemic. Other brands Michelle has worked with include Farm Boy, Hershey's Canada, Nespresso, Kellogg's Canada, Ted Baker, Nike and RBC.

Michelle's television credits include CTV's national morning show Your Morning, The Marilyn Denis Show, Cityline, Breakfast Television, The Morning Show on Global, Toronto Dining, and CP24 Breakfast.

Michelle often appears as an emcee or spokesperson, both on-camera and for live audiences. She has hosted a number of high-profile events including Taste of Toronto, Global Citizen Forum, S. Pellegrino Young Chef competition, Interac Dinner in Black, Chefs for Change and the inaugural Nespresso Café Gourmand competition in Toronto.



As part of the True Italian Taste project, this year's online event celebrates Italian culinary arts as well as certified and authentic Italian products and ingredients.

“THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE OF AUTHENTIC ITALIAN CUISINE”



During the event, **Michelin-star Chef Cristina Bowerman** - connected live from Italy - will present a menu that incorporates Italian regional traditions with local Canadian excellence and products.

Some of the certified Italian products used in this menu are **Aceto Balsamico di Modena, DOP Extra Virgin Olive Oil, Pecorino Toscano and DOP San Marzano Tomatoes.**

Attendees will be able to experience and taste this exclusive dinner, from the comfort of their homes, while celebrating the award winners.

Thanks to ICCO Canada and Eataly Toronto, an exclusive dinner was put together at a special price to be ordered and enjoyed by attendees while celebrating the award winners.

The kit was prepared by Eataly Toronto's Executive Chef Rob Wing, in collaboration with food consultant Chef Roberto Fracchioni. Tonight, this exclusive menu will reveal the past, present and future of excellence in cuisine.

Present:

Ravioli del Plin stuffed with Amatriciana sauce

These ravioli, typically made in Piedmont, are stuffed with Lazio's traditional sauce: Amatriciana. Past and present merge in traditional shape and new content: small little bites of joy that recall childhood memories.

Future:

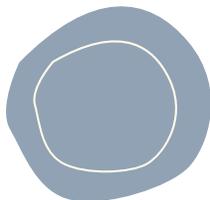
Eggplant cube with pomegranate molasses

The ingredients of this vegetarian steak, prepared with coconut milk, green curry and peanuts, represent a mix of cultures that come together on a plate with unexpected flavours.

Past:

Sous vide beef tenderloin with foie gras torchon with chocolate demi-glace

There's nothing that serves as a more luxurious, rich, and velvety reminder of classical, regal, élitare cuisine than this filet. The lengthy process involved in creating the demi-glace and the foie gras torchon are both testimony of a different time period, lifestyle and social approach to food that did not focus on the nutritional and eco-sustainable issues that are paramount nowadays.



A STROLL AMONGST THE CLOUDS

An interview with

Chef Cristina Bowerman by Corrado Paina

Not long ago, I had the opportunity to chat with Chef Cristina Bowerman, a chef and woman of superior talents and qualities.

She was in Toronto as a guest chef at an ICCO event, which took place at Terroni restaurant. That evening, five women talked about the conditions of women in the workplace. The conversation was run by our board member at the time, Alberta Cefis.

Chef Cristina cooked and talked about various topics; she was witty, funny and pragmatic.

Her cuisine is ahead of its time but realistic, highlighting that there is no future without the past. It embodies her set of values as an Italian world traveler who has come home after many years in the U.S. and all over the world.

She has stopped at Quartiere Testaccio and Trastevere in Rome where she has brought jobs, creativity and even more beauty.

Our interview touched on several issues: Covid-19, Covid-19 and Covid-19. How can you not speak about this issue that has impacted everyone, and in particular, the hospitality sector?

In 2021 ICCO Canada hopes to start a series of events that will focus on this theme.

Watch a link to the full interview at youtu.be/5asSriKcdZs



Corrado Paina: “In terms of your clients and colleagues, what should they do to fight Covid-19 in the sector of investments?”

Should they continue investing? Should they risk their money? In Italy, people are investing in bricks and mortar (buying properties).

What are your plans in the future?”

Cristina Bowerman: “This morning I was listening to an interview of an economist who was stressing exactly this, saying that **one of the ways to relaunch the Italian economy is to attract investments.**

But if you don't issue laws that allow you to be palatable to outside investments, you may still have foreign investments, but not the ones you want. You will have, for instance, the Chinese market that has rooted itself in the economy by buying everything that came on site. You have to make things palatable for outside investors.

Second, you have to invest in the relaunching of manufacturing in Italy. We are a country built on the tertiary sector, which provides services, but we don't manufacture anymore.

We used to have FIAT, now it's not here anymore. We need to push on that pedal. The economist was saying that if we don't launch, or even propose, any law that would make, say, billionaires from the U.S. invest in Italy, they would never do it on their own.

The only thing they would do is to come here and ask, “How much is this

house? 100 Euros?” and then respond, “I'll give you 50 in cash.” And the Italians would sell it.

So, in the end, we would find ourselves with no properties of our own, and everything would be transformed into those cities with huge hotels to exploit tourism.

Laws are important, and investments from outside Italy are important, but so are investments from Italians. In fact, this economist was saying that Italians are among the people who save the most. The problem is that the majority of the time they put their money into foreign banks.

He was saying that issuing laws that will make palatable for outside of Italy and Italian investors to take money from those banks and put them on the Italian market would be necessary to relaunch the Italian economy.

CP: “Attracting investments is essential; it's one of the most important elements for economic recovery.

What are you doing in that sense? Are you investing in the sector?”

CB: “On February 1, I bought a house and a restaurant. Twenty-three days later I found myself in lockdown.

If you're talking about investing in terms of improving a business, yes, I made some investment, but very small, because, as I told you, I just bought the restaurant. We do whatever is necessary – the minimum investment to keep going.

Something that I started before Covid-19, but that is becoming concrete now, is that I'm opening a Glass Hostaria in China, and I'm also creating a fresh pasta and sauces business in my name that will be launched on e-commerce in Turkey.

In Xian, China, we're set to open Glass Hostaria on November 27, although there is a lot of confusion now. Just this morning we received the VISAs, but there are major examinations to be conducted, and China requires a total of 28 days of quarantine before you can set foot there. But I'm very happy because this project that I've been pursuing since last November is taking place.

This gives hope. What I'm saying is that the fact that a country like China, Australia, Taiwan, or Canada, is going back to regular life, tells us that there's light at the end of the tunnel.

So we need to keep pursuing our plans and taking inspiration from those who have correctly responded to Covid-19. And we know for certain that China and Taiwan did that. We need to learn from them.



LAVAZZA

TORINO, ITALIA, 1895

IT'S HOW YOU SAY COFFEE IN ITALIAN



2020 ICCO Canada Pentola d'Oro - Under the Stars AWARDS

AWARD categories:

Pentola d'Oro Award

The award recognizes a Canadian company or individual who has excelled in the whole food and beverage industry - from farming to food production, packaging, retail and distribution.

Italy - Canada Award

The award recognizes a Canadian or Italian company that has excelled in business and cultural relations between Italy and Canada and has invested in the promotion and development of the Italian food industry in both countries.

Lifetime Achievement Award

The award recognizes an exceptional leader who has made outstanding, far-reaching, and long-lasting contributions to the industry over the course of his/her career.

Innovative Entrepreneur Award

The award recognizes an individual who has founded a successful business in the Food and Beverage Industry in Ontario. The entrepreneur exhibits extraordinary energy, inspiration, leadership, and innovation in his/her business pursuits.

Italian Wine Award

The award recognizes companies that have been promoting and selling outstanding Italian wines in addition to introducing exceptional Italian products of the wine sector into the Ontario market.

Selection Committee

Tony Altomare

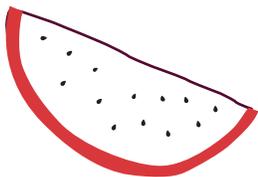
Andrea Chiaramello

Corrado Paina

Patrick Pelliccione

Ron Sedran

A special recognition will be given to **Giacomo Erba**, **Anna Erba** and **Andrea Copreni** for their contributions to the hospitality sector in Toronto and in Milan, Italy, through their various investments and restaurant ventures (Stelvio and Buono Restaurants in Toronto).





FROM OUR FAMILY
TO THE WINNERS AND THEIR FAMILIES
CONGRATULATIONS



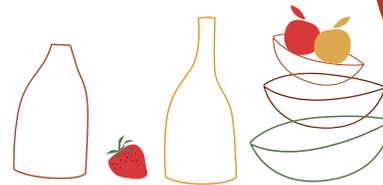
KEEPING OUR HERITAGE ALIVE FOR GENERATIONS TO COME

GREAT FOOD STARTS AT HOME

GABRIELE TORCHETTI

Lady York Foods

Like any member of a family business, Gabriele Torchetti began his career at a young age. His humble beginnings in the Food Retail Industry initiated with his store greeter role, which involved manually opening and closing the door for customers. This taught Gabriele the importance of interacting with customers.



As the years went on his role evolved at Lady York Foods, from stocking shelves to customer service, and even making home deliveries.

Gabriele quickly learned the keys to success are customers, and that going above and beyond for them will always yield a positive return.

Fast forward 30 years, and you will see Gabriele walking the aisles of Lady York Foods, greeting visitors and discussing the latest news. He never turns away a customer who has a question or suggestion about a particular product or the store. Gabriele always welcomes opinions and does his best to please all those who enter Lady York Foods.

Alongside his attention to customer service, Gabriele's success in the Food Retail Industry is due to his commitment to product excellence. He personally researches products in Italy before the store imports them, takes part in plant production tours and meets with new, local vendors at trade shows. In addition to being committed to carrying the best quality product for his customers, he is continually evolving with society. As the needs of his customers change, Gabriele ensures that Lady York adapts as well, such as offering organic, non-GMO, gluten-free, vegan, and dairy-free products.

Within the surrounding community, Gabriele is known for his generosity. Neighbouring schools, churches, community centres and charities turn to Gabriele for assistance with their fundraising endeavours. As the Vice Chair of the MarkeTo District BIA, Gabriele helps spearhead community charitable fundraising initiatives, such as the Fall Food Drive.

Gabriele Torchetti's lifetime dedication and commitment to excellence in the Food Retail Industry is what has distinguished him as an industry leader.



PENTOLA D'ORO AWARD



– The True Taste of Italy –



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NATIONAL**

We Build Great Brands

**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ITALIAN TRADE COMMISSION'S
FUTURE AND ONGOING "AUTHENTIC ITALIAN" CAMPAIGNS
WITH CANADIAN GROCERS, CONTACT US @ toronto@ice.it**



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in promoting the true tastes of Italy.



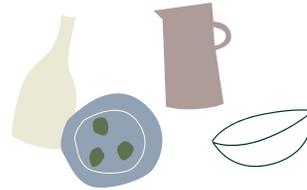
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recipe

*Fortinos, passionate about bringing
family and great food together!*

MASSIMO CAPRA

Capra's Kitchen

Italian expatriate Chef Massimo Capra opened Capra's Kitchen in his hometown of Mississauga. The casual, modern restaurant serves antipasto, pasta and pizza and offers lunch and dinner seven days a week, along with brunch on Saturday and Sunday.



His Italian Fallsview Restaurant in The Sheridan on the Falls blends old world tradition with new world style in direct view of the magnificent Niagara Falls.



Chef Massimo is also Chef brand-owner of Boccone Trattoria Veloce, Boccone Pronto at Pearson airport in Toronto and Soprafino Restaurant at Hamad International Airport in Doha Qatar.

And he's no stranger to television; he's host of his own show *Gourmet Escapes*, is a regular guest expert on City TV's *Cityline*, chef host on the Food Network's *Restaurant Makeover* and has served as a judge on *Chopped Canada*.

Author of *One Pot Italian* and *3 Chefs: The Kitchen Men*, which in 2011 received the gold award from the Canadian Culinary Book Awards, Chef Capra is also the food editor for *Canadian Home Trends* magazine.

Born in Italy, Chef Massimo Capra culinary training began in Salsomaggiore, Parma. He then started his culinary journey at the famous *Trattoria dall' Amelia* in Mestre near Venice.

He spent several years at *Hotel Royal* in Courmayeur, Val d'Aosta, *Hotel Savoy* and *Drei Tannen* restaurant in San Martino di Castrozza, and under contract with Gallia Hotels in Milan and Various resort properties.

Chef Massimo Capra came to Toronto in 1982 and worked at "Archers", a restaurant owned by a family member. In 1989, he became an acclaimed chef at "Prego della Piazza", where he remained for nine years.

In 1997, Chef Massimo joined forces with Paolo Paolini to open *Mistura* Restaurant.



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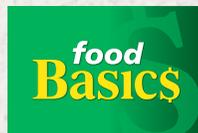
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*Market leader in Italy (IRI data Y.E. Sept 2019)
†Claim based in part on data reported by Nielsen through its MarketTrack Service for the Canned Tuna category for the 52 week period ending July 18, 2020 for the National Branded Tuna in Olive Oil segment in Canada and GB+DR+MM Channels in Canada. Copyright © 2020, Nielsen Company.

A top-down view of a white ceramic bowl filled with penne pasta. The pasta is coated in a light sauce and mixed with bright red cherry tomatoes, some whole and some halved. Fresh green basil leaves and small sprigs of thyme are scattered throughout. White cheese, possibly ricotta, is dolloped in several places. The bowl sits on a grey, textured surface.

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metro



JOE PULLA

Johnvince Group of Companies

Joe (Giuseppe) Pulla was born in Toronto, Ontario in 1962 to Italian immigrant parents, Irma and Vincenzo Pulla. At the age of nine, Joe learned the bulk nut business by helping his dad at the weekend market. The family business became Johnvince Foods, and Joe became a full-time employee upon graduating from high school.



Joe learned the business very quickly, and with the support of his family, he took over the reins of the company. His vision was to expand the bulk food concept, and he soon opened several bulk store locations throughout Ontario and in the U.S.

By the late 1980s Johnvince Foods firmly established itself as the leader in the bulk food industry by revolutionizing the sector through its large distribution network, servicing both major and independent grocery stores across Canada and the U.S..

Johnvince has been a recipient of many noteworthy awards, such as Canada's Top 50 Best Managed Companies (Platinum member), and the Golden Tree Nut Award — a prestigious worldwide recognition given to only a select few companies that have contributed to the long-term global excellence of its industry.

In addition to his flagship company, Joe is proud to have under his corporate umbrella, Aurora Importing, which carries over 4,000 products and is one of Canada's largest Italian food distributors; the Donini Chocolate Company, established 50 years ago in Bellville, Ontario; the Waupoos Estate Winery and the Barley Days Brewery, representing both the first winery and the first craft brewery in Prince Edward County, Ontario; and The Big Apple in Colborne, Ontario, an iconic roadside landmark attraction that hosts more than 5,000,000 visitors annually.



metro



LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT



SUCCESS IS ACKNOWLEDGED IN MANY DIFFERENT WAYS AND SOME FIND IT HARD TO ACCEPT PRAISE FOR THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS ALTHOUGH THEY DEFINITELY DESERVE TO BE CELEBRATED BY THEIR PEERS AND COLLEAGUES FOR THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

ON BEHALF OF THE **AURORA IMPORTING FAMILY**, WE CONGRATULATE **MR. JOE PULLA** ON BEING A WELL-DESERVED RECIPIENT OF THE **ICCO CANADA LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD** IN RECOGNITION OF HIS UNDENIABLE CONTRIBUTION TO THE FOOD INDUSTRY.



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SALVATORE MELE

Mele Group



The art of making authentic Italian sauce requires not only the best ingredients, but hours upon hours of watchful simmering to develop the rich, deep flavour that a good tomato sauce requires. Salvatore Mele fondly remembers spending entire Sundays with his family, making sugo della domenica.



When asked why he has devoted so much of his adult life to Italian cuisine, it is these Sundays that he recalls:

“I want people to be able to enjoy the passion that goes into traditional and authentic Italian food not just on Sundays, but every day of the week.”

Coming from a long line of motivated entrepreneurs and talented cooks, it is no surprise that Sal ended up starting his own chain of successful restaurants and trattorias. From the trendy Capocaccia Trattoria of Rosedale to Oretta in the vibrant Fashion District of Toronto, Sal has never strayed very far from his Southern Italian roots. In his youth, he lived in Italy on a soccer scholarship, playing the beautiful game.

It's been said that the heart of Italy is family, its soul is the kitchen and its passion is its people's love for food. This is the essence of Salvatore Mele, a restaurateur of passion and heart.

For Sal, food and family go hand in hand. That's why despite his hectic schedule, he still makes time to have family dinner with his wife Giuseppina, son Andrea and daughters Alba and Ilaria every evening.



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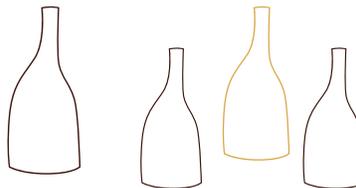
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Todd Halpern joined his father Harold in 1979. Todd's brother Colin joined the company in 1991, and Todd's son Adam came on board in 2017.

Todd and Colin have seen Halpern Enterprises grow tremendously over the last number of years.

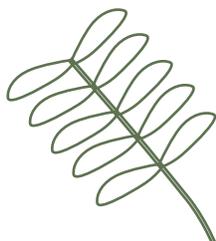
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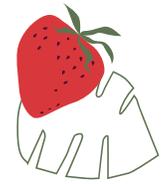


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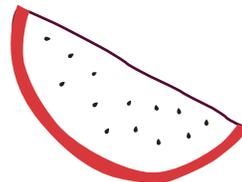
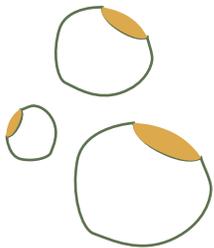
JENNY LONGO: MEETING CHALLENGES HEAD-ON

By Rita Simonetta



“Business as usual has definitely changed,” said Jenny Longo, in response to the pandemic’s impact on Longo Brothers Fruit Markets Inc, where she serves as Senior Director of Private Brands, Culinary Innovation, Central Kitchen. But the food retailer, which was launched in 1956 by three brothers: Joe (Jenny’s father), Tommy and Gus, has met the challenges head-on.

JENNY LONGO



“As has been the case with other businesses, it has been a very challenging year, but we are extremely proud of our teams,” said Longo, who is an ICCO Canada Board Member. “I feel we’ve adapted very well to the situation.”



When the pandemic became a reality several months ago, Longo and her team set up committees comprising staff and management. The committees, which initially met daily and are still in place now, focused on communication and preparation.

As new pandemic information and protocols emerged, they were able to respond and adapt quickly. As always, the priority was the well-being of team members and guests.

“Everyone had a voice,” said Longo. “We were open and transparent to our team and guests. We weren’t doing things in isolation; we were in line with what they wanted to see occur.”

Moreover, the committees provided team members with an opportunity to voice their opinions, concerns and as a platform to suggest what they needed.

“We enforced the changes quite early on,” noted Longo. “Safety was always top of mind.”

In addition to implementing safety measures around cleanliness, disinfecting, masks and social distancing, that’s also meant transforming various areas in the store with health protocols as the guiding principle.

“Our hot and cold bars have changed to full-service,” explains Longo. “Some of the specialty Longo services like the deli meats, bakery and prepared foods sections are slowly resuming to normalcy with the addition of plexiglass and full PPE requirements.”

While the experience has no doubt been demanding, Longo points out that it’s also had some positive results. Longo, who said the retailer has always put its team members first, said that philosophy was more important than ever before.

“We’re a family-run business. Putting our team members first is really important in terms of having them feel respected, heard and valued.”

In terms of trends, Longo has noticed the **online grocery sector has grown exponentially and will continue to grow in importance** as guests adjust to new working from home realities. Also, she’s noticed that more people are cooking at home, sometimes even creating some staples from scratch, such as dough for bread and pizza.

When it comes to the selling and distribution of Made-in-Italy products, Longo said interest has been higher than ever. “There’s an appetite for great food,” she said. “And **Italy produces a lot of wonderful products. We support by carrying a wide assortment of authentic Made-In-Italy products in stores and online** at www.grocerygateway.com.”

So, what does the future hold for the food sector?

“We’re still learning what the new normal looks like,” explained Longo. “The whole retail sector has changed indefinitely, however, we are confident we can create remarkable food experiences by putting Family Standards at the heart of everything we do.”

She added that proactive safety measures will remain in place for the foreseeable future, and that Longo’s will continue to adapt based on recommendations from government agencies as well as industry bodies.

“There has been a silver lining, though. **We now know we can react to situations quickly and adapt as needed.**”



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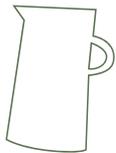
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