

## Albie Aware brings needed help to women with breast cancer

See page 20

Marty Relles presents  
'Janey Way Memories'  
See page 2

COMMUNITY CALENDAR, PAGES 21-22 • KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOR, PAGE 10 • FACES AND PLACES, PAGE 23

### Inside This Edition



Adventures in dancing with whales

See page 10



'Willy Wonka' to debut Nov. 3

See page 8



# Now, THAT'S Italian

Giovanni's Pizzeria brings genuine New York flavor to East Sacramento See page 16

### Room to Roam!

Beautiful gated property features a 2300 sqft 4 bedroom, 2.5 bath home with hardwood floors, living & dining rooms with vaulted ceilings, French doors off the master bedroom open to the balcony, & large backyard with covered patio complete this park-like property.

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### Charming East Sac!

This cute 2 bedroom home offers an inviting front porch & a big bay window in the living room, original kitchen with classic Wedgewood stove, hardwood floors, dual pane windows and CH&A. Plus, French doors off the dining room open to the lush & spacious backyard. This is a great home and a great value!

\$259,950



# 'That's-a Italian' – Authentic New York flavor at Giovanni's Pizzeria

By SUSAN LAIRD  
East Sacramento News editor  
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When displaced New Yorkers walk through the door of Giovanni's Old World New York Pizzeria in East Sacramento for the first time, it is not uncommon for them to stop dead in their tracks, inhale deeply and then reach in their pockets for their cell phones.

"Mom, I've found pizza."

This reaction does not surprise John Ruffaine, co-owner of Giovanni's, in the least. It is something he has come to expect, and to reflect upon with pride as a native of Bedside, Brooklyn himself.

"I've had people literally cry at my counter because they were so happy," he said. "They walk in the door, and they know they've found a taste of home. They can tell just from the smell."

The sign on the building says "New York" pizza, and that is what John prepares for his customers every day. He is committed to providing Sacramento's pizza lovers with the "real deal."

"This is real Italian pepperoni," he said as he prepared a pizza pie. "And this is real mozzarella from New York. We don't throw dough here – we stretch it. Those guys who throw dough around aren't authentic. Nobody in New York or Italy does that."

John so enjoys making pizzas that customers sometimes laughingly accuse him of not wanting to hand it over to them. He seems to work with a perpetual smile on his face as he crafts each pizza. He is passionate about producing a pizza that is as New York as possible. He was taught by those in the know, in the Italian neighborhoods of New York. The recipes are Old World Italian.

"I made my first pizza when I was eight years old," he said. "I was helping



Chris Rodrigues, daytime manager at Giovanni's Pizzeria, prepares three large pizzas for hungry customers.



A "Pizza Rustica" is lovingly placed into the oven to bake to delicious perfection by John Ruffaine, the "Giovanni" of Giovanni's Pizza.

my mom in the kitchen. Old time Italians taught me, if you made a mistake you got more than just a payment – if you know what I mean."

John with his wife, Jenny, and Carlo and Allison Grifone founded Giovanni's in 2001.

"We're two Italian American families, and our families are from Salerno, Sicily and Calabria," he said. "A lot of what's on our menu is inspired from Southern Italy – it's actually what they use in their pizza. We don't use any enhancers. What you are getting is genuine flavor and texture. We use only the finest ingredients. If it's not made from scratch, it's imported from Italy or New York."

Sizes are larger than what most Sacramento residents are used to seeing. A large at Giovanni's is a generous 16 inches across – a good value for a hungry family.

A standard Pizza Pie is made with Giovanni's tomato sauce, mozzarella, extra virgin olive oil and spices (Large, \$17.95). The Little Italy is generously topped with meatballs, ricotta, garlic and spices (\$11.95 for small, up to \$24.75 for large).

Specialty pizzas are featured every three weeks.

"The specials focus on different regions of Italy," John said. "Those are true Neapolitan pizzas."

Customers can't get enough – they are tremendously loyal.

"My mother is from New York and I've been out there lots of times. This is the closest thing around here to a real New York pizza," said Tony Brown, Sacramento resident and loyal customer. "Not to mention, I like the customer service. John treats you real well."

The pizzeria is large and spacious – intended for families and community gatherings.

"This is where baseball teams come after the game," John said. "It's where families gather. It's where a kid can get his first job and bring his first date. And I've seen that happen a lot in the last nine years."

"Giovanni" is Italian for John. His name, quite literally, is on the building. He is also known for his support of local schools and charities. Many a Giovanni's pizza has raised funds for a worthy cause.

"There's a lot of action behind what I do," John said. "My name is on the building. I care about this business and the community. We help everyone in the community. Those kids are the future."

Giovanni's Old World New York Pizzeria is located at 6200 Folsom Boulevard in Sacramento. A second location is at 5924 South Land Park Drive in Sacramento. Visit [www.giosnypizza.com](http://www.giosnypizza.com) and their page on Facebook.