

Honoring NICK SAVIANO

BY LISA STAMOS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIM PRISCHING

NICK SAVIANO brings his family's five-star food recipes and family friendly service to Barrington's Pizza Factory—a beloved neighborhood restaurant where he worked since he was 13, under his dad's ownership, and then for the past 10 years as its owner. Saviano's dad and uncle knew Ray DiMatteo, the original owner of the Pizza Factory. They partnered for a while and then Saviano's dad bought the business. The main fare is authentic and classic tavern-style Chicago thin crust pizza. Today, Saviano offers a diverse menu, one that keeps evolving, he says. He has a liquor license, sells deep dish pizza, but there's no hotdogs (for which he'll refer

people to other local restaurants). A large collection of house-made wings and rib sauces includes fun names like Oh Canada, Asian Persuasion, and Gone with the Wings.

Saviano loves Chicago, cooking—and as the regulars know—his customers. His “secret sauce” hails from a lineage of family and friends in the mid-1900's Chicago restaurant business. But what really makes this place a destination is its owner. Before the pandemic, the Pizza Factory boasted a block-party atmosphere where everyone talked with everyone. It was the place to meet. It won't take long for that to come back.



HERE ARE SOME WORDS THAT OTHERS SHARED
ABOUT **NICK SAVIANO**

Ananth Bhogaraju, FRIEND

Walking into Pizza Factory in Barrington is like walking into the home of an old friend. Every time I stop in for dinner, I feel transported. I met Nick Saviano years ago at the birthday party of a mutual friend and recognized him instantly. Having visited his restaurant many times over my 30 years as a Barrington resident, I got to know his friendly manner and big smile. And, of course, his amazing singing voice! The time and care he puts into connecting with everyone who walks into his restaurant is second only to the love he puts into creating delicious food. Throughout a very difficult 2020, Nick kept us all in good spirits and hopeful for a return to our normal lives through his positive outlook and pride as a small business owner with the determination to succeed. I consider him to be a friend and an all-around good guy. We have bonded over our sons' mutual love for baseball. As my son goes off to college this fall, one of the things I will miss is heading over to the Pizza Factory with him to grab our favorite food in town and, of course, to see Nick Saviano for a dose of good cheer and laughs.

Joshua Bell, CUSTOMER

To get a good idea of the mind behind the Pizza Factory, Nick Saviano, look no further than the menu. Pizza Factory is far more than a "pizza joint". The menu is so diverse that it can only be called a restaurant, which just happens to serve amazing, if the not best, pizza in the NW Burbs. Each menu item has a story, reflected in the name of the dish. He knows his customers by name, and often by address. Sometimes when his staff member reads back my address, Nick can be heard in the background asking to "tell the Bell family, hello." He then knows to make a sausage pizza with double sausage, a meatball sub, and a Sears Tower Salad. I am certain this is not saved for us.

Nick is an amazing family man who pours just as much effort into the community. When not sponsoring events or baseball teams, he is at the field not only cheering for his kids to play well, but cheering equally as much for every other kid on the field. He treats everyone like a personal friend or family, and that is why we enjoy sending him our business on a weekly basis. And, to be clear, we are not alone in this. There is a reason Pizza Factory has been around for so many years, and that reason is Nick Saviano.

NICK SAVIANO IN HIS OWN WORDS

Which historical figure do you most identify with? Frank Sinatra. **What living hero figure would you like to meet?** Any MD. I'm in awe of these great people. **Your funniest experience at the restaurant?** What happens at the Pizza Factory, stays at the Pizza Factory. **Favorite movie?** "Goodfellas". **Where's your happy place?** Hawaii. **Your guiding personal philosophy for life?** Organization is the key to success. **Do you collect anything?** No. **What traits do you admire most in others?** Honesty. **What trait do you most dislike in others?** Dishonesty. **What is something others would be surprised to learn about you?** I used to sing in a '50s-'60s band. **What are you most proud of in yourself?** My work ethic. **Favorite song you like to sing?** "Little Man You've had a Busy Day". **Your greatest passions in life?** My wife and kids, singing, and cooking. **What's on your bucket list?** Visiting Italy. **What is your favorite food?** Pizza!!! **What is your idea of perfect happiness?** Sitting in the pool, looking out into the ocean, in February, drinking a Mai Tai in Hawaii. **Cubs or White Sox?** Cubs! Chicago has another team? I was not aware. U

