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Artistry in catering pays off

By Ryan Carter, Staff Writer
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IRWINDALE - Vincent DeRosa had his misgivings 20 years ago when he started Picasso's Cafe, Bakery and Catering Company.

The restaurant was in a business park in the middle of a city that didn't have many residents.

But the business had its advantages. His wife, Maria, wanted him to be home at normal hours and the weekend to help raise their family. So running a business in a town that closed down early had potential.

The potential has paid off. DeRosa and his family celebrate their 20th year next month.

"I'm very proud to have served the community for 20 years," he said. "We're doing what we love. It's our passion."

That passion started when DeRosa and his family saw potential demand for a restaurant, after the family had moved their furniture business from Los Angeles to a new business center in Irwindale.

So early on, they started the restaurant, which originally served traditional Italian fare. The restaurant took off, using Vincent DeRosa's training as a chef, to serve Irwindale's growing business clientele. They sold the furniture business and committed to the restaurant.

DeRosa's wife, Maria, left her teaching career.

Now, 20 years later, the business is serving everything from paninis to pastries from 7 in the morning to 2:30 p.m. and catering to corporate clients every day at all hours.

What makes the business unique is that place in a corporate park.

"It's completely untraditional," said Marissa Buckisch, DeRosa's daughter, who runs the marketing end of the business. "That's part of what draws people to us. You don't expect it. From the outside, it's a business park. From the inside. You feel like you walked into something in Old Town."

You don't expect it in corporate park, she said. But that's part of its appeal. So much so that the family is looking at options for whether to expand into other corporate parks.

But the DeRosas are proud of the moment, knowing their children, educated in finance and marketing, are taking hold of the next generation of the business.

"He saw himself here at the time we got married, running something that had to do with food," Maria DeRosa said.

It seems the decision to try it paid off, she said.

"We still have a life," she said.

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Picasso's restaurant owners Vincent and Maria DeRosa and daughter Marisa DeRosa Buckisch at the Irwindale eatery Oct. 2, 2009. (SGVN/Staff photo by Leo Jarzomb)

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