

# FRANCO'S RE-OPENING AT NEW LOCATION

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The cozy, new location of Franco's Restaurant offers a more intimate dining experience. JOHN LIVIERO PHOTOS

## FRANCO'S IS BACK!

In business since 1958, iconic restaurant re-opens at new location after devastating fire

BY KAREN PATON-EVANS  
Postmedia Content Works

It's full on flavour and great value at Franco's, newly built and now open after a kitchen fire gutted the restaurant in December 2018.

"We are pleased to welcome loyal and new guests to our new place," says John Donato. He and his wife, Josie, have owned Franco's since 1997.

"My parents were supposed to retire — or at least slow down — starting New Year's Day 2019. The fire delayed their plans for a year as our family restaurant needed their expertise," says Frank Donato. "Finally, this month, they are able to give retirement another shot."

Reimagining Franco's, the family was mindful of the generations of neighbours they have felt privileged to serve. The original dining room accommodated 300 people. In the new restaurant at 1459 Tecumseh Rd. E. in South Walkerville, the Donatos opted for a cozier feel and seating for 30.

"Our returning guests love the dining room, remarking on the more intimate space and modern/urban industrial décor. Everything is lighter and brighter than our former location down the street," says Donato. Rustic wood plank floors, walls finished in soft white and statement Italian tiles and a slate blue bar topped in white marble set the scene for casual date nights, business dinners and family meals.

Since the seating capacity is one-tenth that of the original Franco's,

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the Donato family have reserved Sundays for private events. People celebrating baptisms, showers and other important life events can reserve the entire restaurant and enjoy dedicated service.

"We use the same menu for regular dining and catering, whether we serve your party at Franco's or at your location in Windsor," says Donato.

The casually stylish dining room is open to everyone 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday. "Come as you are," Donato invites.

Takeout and delivery are available 11 a.m. to 1 a.m., seven days a week. Delivery service is free city-wide.

True to Franco's distinctive taste, "the food we serve is homemade by us. Our mayonnaise, salad dressings and soups are all made from scratch," Donato says. "We realize our labour-intensive food prep is not how it's done at chain restaurants, but we won't compromise on our flavour or quality."

"We've always sourced and bought local ingredients, long before it became a trend," Donato reflects. "It's more personal. I meet with the growers and producers, who take as much pride in the ingredients they raise as we do in the food we serve."

SEE FRANCO'S ON **SR5**



The new Franco's Restaurant location at 1459 Tecumseh Rd. E., close to the original Franco's, which caught fire in December 2018.



From 4 to 9 p.m. every Wednesday, the Donato family fills up the hungriest guest with the all you can eat special featuring pasta, bread and soup or salad for \$15.95.

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1459 Tecumseh Road East, Windsor • [www.francospizzawindsor.com](http://www.francospizzawindsor.com) • 519-258-3151 **Parking in the back off Gladstone**



# FRANCO'S RE-OPENING AT NEW LOCATION

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Fresh produce from Essex Coun-  
CONTINUED FROM **SR4**

ty, cheeses from Galati Cheese Com-  
pany Ltd. in Windsor, all Ontario  
meats – knowing where our food  
comes from lets us serve Franco's  
dishes with consistency and confi-  
dence.”

“Local is not only better for  
the environment, it simply tastes  
better.”

The bounty of the county is  
transformed into guests' favourites,  
such as chicken parmigiana and  
pasta. “Judging from our guests’  
feedback, I believe Franco's is up-  
holding Windsor's reputation for  
great pizza,” says Donato. “We also  
cater to guests wanting gluten free  
pizza and pasta.”

“We are happy to let everyone  
know we have brought back our  
popular lunch buffet,” he says. A  
delicious spread is presented 11  
a.m. to 2 p.m., Tuesday through Fri-  
day. It includes chicken, pasta dish-  
es, potatoes, salad and desserts – all  
you can eat for just \$12.95.

A light yet hearty option is the  
all you can eat soup, salad and  
bread bar for \$8.95, available 11  
a.m. to 2 p.m., Tuesday through  
Saturday.

The household budget stretch-  
es farther with Franco's midweek  
deals. From 4 to 9 p.m. every Wed-  
nesday, the Donato family fills up

the hungriest guest with the all  
you can eat special featuring pasta,  
bread and soup or salad for \$15.95.  
“Choose your personal favourite  
combination, pairing penne, spa-  
ghetti or fettucine with our savoury  
meat, garden-fresh tomato, creamy  
alfredo, spicy arrabiata or garlic  
and herb marinara sauce,” Donato  
says.

Thursday evenings are popu-  
lar, when Franco's puts its chicken  
or veal parmigiana dinner on spe-  
cial from 4 to 9 p.m. Accompanied  
by the guest's choice of pasta with  
meat or tomato sauce, plus soup or  
salad, the special is only \$15.95.

All you can eat breaded perch  
with golden fries, just \$19.95, is fea-  
tured from 4 to 9 p.m. every Friday  
and Saturday.

“It's wonderful to see people eat-  
ing, drinking and laughing at our  
tables again in South Walkerville,”  
Donato says. “Now that Franco's is  
back, my family has had a moment  
to look back on our whirlwind year  
and realize just how fortunate we  
are to have such loyal guests and  
staff encouraging us throughout it  
all. Thank you.”

Parking can be found in the rear  
of the restaurant off of Gladstone.

For more information, please call  
519-258-3151 or visit [www.franco-s-pizzawindsor.com](http://www.franco-s-pizzawindsor.com).



Frank Donato (right) and his father John welcome you to the new Franco's Restaurant at 1459 Tecumseh Rd. E.



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