

Tony Roni's Launches in Philadelphia

Pizza Franchise Company set to Open Flagship Store in February, 2008

Already the owner of four flourishing neighborhood pizza stores in the greater Philadelphia area, Tony Altomare is ready to bring his three passions – food, family and business– to a wider audience. His new pizza franchise company, Tony Roni's, will open its flagship store at 4504 City Line Avenue on Friday, February 22, 2008.

Altomare, 38, has a simple mission for Tony Roni's – to make it America's Best Neighborhood Pizza Company. The franchise will feature the thin crust, Neapolitan pizza and old-world tomato pie he has spent 12 years perfecting at his Tony A's pizza shops, along with a wide selection of salads, sandwiches, wraps and Philly-style cheeseteaks. Whether customers dine in or order delivery, they can expect to be treated like family.

"My learning ground has been Tony A's, and I'm taking that to the franchise world," Altomare said.

Altomare is looking for potential franchisees who share his passion for and commitment to serving excellent food in an inviting setting. The total cost of a Tony Roni's franchise is \$280,000 to \$350,000. Financing options will be available.

The flagship store will have a training facility next door, where Altomare will educate and train his franchise partners. While eager to guide franchisees, he also wants them to have an internal drive to succeed. He hopes to open at least three more Tony Roni's – in Center City, Havertown, Hatfield, and South Jersey – in 2008.

"There's opportunity in the pizza business," Altomare said. "It's a \$30 billion industry and growing. Pizza is America's favorite food, so the industry will never go cold.

"We're looking to build a culture where people will share the passion and care about the business the same

way we do," he added.

Altomare wouldn't have it any other way. He grew up in a traditional Italian home in the East Falls neighborhood of Philadelphia, where his father was a police officer. His mother, meanwhile, made sure that the family came together for home cooked meals, especially dinner.

"Everything in my family revolved around food, and it was important that we ate and spent time together," Altomare said.

After 5 years as a financial planner at Creative Financial Group, Altomare decided to combine his enjoyment of food, family and business by joining the pizza industry in 1996. He began working as a financial advisor for a client whose family owned pizzerias in Naples, Italy – the birthplace of Neapolitan pizza – before opening his first Tony A's store in Conshohocken, Pennsylvania in 1999.

"I loved the business aspect of financial planning and the advisor relationship," Altomare said. "But I missed the idea of making people happy with food. Pizza provided the perfect opportunity to do that, because it's economical and fun for the family."

With Tony Roni's, Altomare plans to continue offering the combination of top-notch food and friendly service his Tony A's pizza shops have delivered for the last decade. The franchise will also have a family touch. His brother-in-law, David Smith, will handle much of the franchise development and marketing of Tony Roni's.

Altomare and Smith have put years of research and development into the Tony Roni's brand launch. Successful Philadelphia franchisors Bob Tumolo (Rita's Water Ice), John Scardapane (Salad Works) and Charlie Chase (College Pro Painters) have provided great insight into the development



of Tony Roni's.

Altomare tapped restaurant designer Jesse Gardner, who designed Philadelphia's Cubre Libré and Vietnam restaurants to design the flagship store. The decor will include a gorgeous glass and marble mosaic featuring soft greens, Tuscan red and a splash of gold. The walls are adorned with high wainscoting and oversized porcelain tile set to resemble traditional stone base coursing one might find in old buildings in Italy. Floor tiles include rich browns and grays — shades reminiscent of outdoor courtyard space. Wall colors are rendered in gold and taupe sepias, and the booth seating contains rich bronze vinyl with deep red fabric backs. Comfy wood café chairs and tables are stained dark Walnut.

Altomare can't wait to start serving customers in a new way. "We will have the processes for great customer service techniques and delicious products," Altomare said. "We're going to be teaching franchisees how to succeed in business, in pizza-making, and in their lives.

"People think great pizza is in the crust, or in the cheese, or in the sauce," he added. "Really, they're all equally important, and my product reflects that. But you can mess up a good product if the process isn't right, and that's what's missing in our industry. At Tony Roni's, we will offer that attention to detail."