

Vincent Fiorillo (June 4, 1938 – Oct 18, 2010)

Santa Clara business owner Vincent Fiorillo was a true Italian American who was known by all as Vinnie. Born and raised in Brooklyn New York, Vinnie had an undeniable natural talent in culinary arts paired with the gift of being able to talk and relate to everyone. With the idea of making a better life for his family, he decided to leave his hometown of Brooklyn, NY in 1972 to start a new life here in the Santa Clara Valley. His first business was VIP catering in Palo Alto in 1972 where he worked 15 hours a day seven days a week. He decided to sell that business in 1975 and opened Fiorillo's restaurant in Sunnyvale. While operating Fiorillo's in Sunnyvale, he noticed a pizzeria that had gone out of business called Me and Ed's pizza at 2230 El Camino Real in Santa Clara. This was the city where he always felt at home and more importantly, it was the community he truly loved. Once in Santa Clara, Vincent made a name for himself with his Italian cuisine and the type of atmosphere he would bring into a room that would make you feel like family. Not only was the food amazing, but Vinnie made it a point to talk to his guests. With his personality and charisma, Vinnie did not just have guests or customers, in his eyes they were his friends and family. All the local schools and clubs frequented Fiorillo's where it became family traditions. He expanded Fiorillo's, adding Santa Clara's first arcade where all the local families visited before and after events. During the early 1980's he expanded once again with the addition of a banquet room with seating for up to 60 guests.

Vinnie had a soft spot for the youth in our community and would consistently go out of his way to sponsor many local schools, Pop Warner, and other sport teams. Out of the kindness of his heart, Vinnie anonymously donated to cover the costs for youth whose family did not have the means to pay for such equipment. Vinnie wanted to give all children within the community a chance to play. He had a soft spot for the underdog whom he hired regularly, never forgetting where he came from. People still come into the restaurant to this day saying how he changed their life for the better by giving them a chance. Over the years there have been countless customers who had their first date in Vinnie's restaurant and eventually ended up getting married in the banquet room. Families continue to come in and reminisce about how Vinnie would bring the children gelato, or how Vinnie would be cooking in the kitchen and send out special items he was making for himself because he truly cared about every customer. It was times like these where customers transitioned from customer to friend to family. Vinnie's table was always open for people to sit with him. They would talk, ask for his advice, and simply get to know each other.

When the lease expired at 2230 El Camino Real, the City approached Vinnie about moving his restaurant a few miles down the road to where it stands today. It was here where Vinnie was finally able to execute the vision for how he wanted his business to look as well as how he wanted it presented in the heart of Santa Clara. Vinnie designed his restaurant with a beautiful banquet room, astounding dining room, and bar area with memorabilia supporting all the local major league sports teams that bring this community together. Vinnie was given the opportunity to choose the address of this dream location. In the blink of an eye, he chose 638 El Camino Real because his birthday is June 1938. Vinnie was able to leave a little piece of himself in the city he truly loved.