

FOCUS ON BUSINESS

Fornos of Italy, where customers get great food for a great value in a great atmosphere

All the recent publicity and community buzz about the fine cuisine and atmosphere at Fornos of Italy might make it appear that Executive Chef Armando Florido is an overnight success. The fact is, he's been working for 20 years to perfect both his culinary and customer service skills.

"We pride ourselves in serving homemade Italian food made fresh every day, the way it should be done," said Florido, who also owns the restaurant located at 6439 West 43rd (at Hwy. 290). His wife, Vicki, helps him run the business.

To name a few, Chef Florido and Fornos have been featured on the "High Tech Texan Show" with Michael Garfield, "The Garden Line" with Randy Lemon and "Delicious Mischief" with John DeMers. Florido is also being featured cooking on Lara Bell's "Wild on Houston" TV show.

The restaurant recently received a \$500,000 interior remodel that not only rewards patrons with a wonderfully warm atmosphere in which to dine, but also provides more room with the addition of two new private dining rooms and a wine cellar. Also new is a wine locker, where patrons can store their own stock.

Florido always wanted to be a chef. Twenty years ago,



Executive Chef/Owner Armando Florido and wife, Vicki, are celebrating their 20th year in the business. Photo by Greg Densmore

he took a chance by opening two dining establishments on the city's west side.

"I just decided to throw the dice," he said.

Diners in the mood for homemade Italian food that's delicious down to the last forkful can't go wrong by sitting down for a meal at Fornos. The menu choices feature authentic dishes inspired by every corner of Italy's famous culinary map, ranging from seafood, prime steaks and veal, to chicken

piccata or veal marsala. And Florido encourages diners to mix and match al dente pasta and sauces to their hearts' content.

The cuisine at Fornos is also very affordable.

"Our prices are very reasonable," said Florido. "We don't try to kill people with high prices because we want them to come back time and time again."

Most of the staff at Fornos has been with Florido for many years, and prides

themselves on providing good, friendly service.

"Come celebrate all your special occasions at Fornos," Florido said. "We have great value, great food, great wine and a great atmosphere."

Restaurant hours are 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Friday and noon to 10 p.m. Saturday. The restaurant is closed Sunday. Take-out is also available.

Call 713-688-8757 for information.