



# A recipe for success

By Monica Soladay

*NIAF Area Coordinator Robert Silvani and chef Frank Eucalitto are the faces behind Eucavani's Italian Sauces, a sauce company poised to take on the nation.*

**N**IAF Area Coordinator Bob Silvani, an investment securities executive, first met Frank Eucalitto, chef and owner of Café Chardonnay in Palm Beach Gardens, at a private school in Florida attended by their children.

Their friendship unfolded over the next 15 years, with the pair hosting joint Columbus Day parties. The gatherings grew in size from about 20 couples with whom they were close to more than 150 people and were reminiscent of Silvani's family dinners in Smithtown, Long Island.

But these parties were best known for their homemade pasta sauces - vodka, puttanesca and pomodoro in particular - in addition to Silvani's father's eggplant parmigiana. Guests looked forward to tasting those recipes year after year with an enthusiasm not lost on their hosts. Friends dubbed Silvani and Eucalitto "the Eucavani food group," blending their two names; the moniker stuck.

In 2004, Silvani and Eucalitto began to seriously consider doing something professionally with the sauces. "Everybody loved them, so we said, 'Let's see if we can take a couple of these ideas and actually put together a sauce company,'" Silvani reminisced.

To better formulate their recipes, Silvani and Eucavani personally tasted every sauce on the market. "We did our research," Silvani said. "There

were only a couple that were really, to our tasting, traditional Italian sauce. We couldn't find a vodka sauce in a jar that was really great."

They began to market their products to restaurants, hotels, country clubs and other businesses affiliated with the food services industry. Their all-natural, no-sugar-added, preservative-, gluten- and mostly meat-free sauces were an instant hit in the Florida area. "We are definitely a high-end gourmet sauce, much thicker and chunkier than most of the products out there," Silvani said. "They're as close to homemade sauce or as close to gourmet restaurant quality as you can find."

By 2006, Eucavani's was established in the food service industry and looking to further expand. What followed was a stroke of luck: Whole Foods Market, the country's largest retailer of natural and organic foods, agreed to stock Eucavani's sauces on the shelves of its Florida stores because the company was a local food producer. The opportunity was just what Silvani and Eucalitto needed to branch out into the retail market. Soon, their products were on the shelves of other Florida stores like Publix and Costco.

Silvani attributes their success to the company's ingredients, particularly Eucavani's use of fresh, U.S.-grown tomatoes from Stanislaus Tomatoes in ➤

**EUCAVANI'S**  
CREATOR OF FINE ITALIAN SAUCES



Modesto, California - one of the premier suppliers of restaurant-grade produce in the country. Additionally, the company imports cheese from Wisconsin and cream from Pennsylvania. Legendary baseball coach Tommy Lasorda, who has purchased the sauce, has commented that he enjoys it alongside a glass of his award-winning Lasorda wine, Silvani says.

Silvani juggles Eucavani's while working as regional vice president for Axa Equitable Insurance Company and serving as chairman of the North Palm Beach County Chapter of the American Cancer Society. But making the perfect pasta sauce continues to be a passion.

Today Eucavani's is working to expand to a national level. Stores in California, New Jersey, Rhode Island and Connecticut now carry their products. Their biggest challenge, Silvani says, is to build their brand even further.

Running a business so closely linked to Italian heritage and consumers' family traditions can also present a number of unique challenges. "I think the blessing is that people know we have a great heritage of food and great sauces," Silvani said. "But, some of the sauces are more domestic than Italian...It's different than most of us grew up on, and there's the challenge."

Another challenge stemmed from the company's decision to not offer meat-based sauces, although their Vodka sauce does contain two percent prosciutto. "Most Italian Sunday marinara sauces were made with meat," Silvani said. "Our challenge is getting most Italians to try a fresh-tasting pasta sauce that doesn't have any meat in it."

Instead, Silvani urges his customers to use Eucavani's sauces "as base to do anything with." And he hopes consumers will be doing just that as Eucavani's Sauces come to grocery store shelves near you. ▲

**For more information about Eucavani's Italian Sauces,  
visit [www.eucavanis.com](http://www.eucavanis.com).**