



CATHY PHILLIPS

Eddie's Pizzeria Cerino keeps good taste all in the family

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For **Eddie Cerino**, food and family go hand in hand. He credits his grandmother Carrie, founder of **Carrie Cerino's Ristorante** in North Royalton, with fostering his love of cooking at an early age.

After training at the Culinary Institute of America in New York in the early 1980s, Cerino opened his first restaurant, **Fast Eddie's**, within a few miles of his grandmother's namesake restaurant. By 1990, he had gone on to found **Eddie's Creekside Restaurant** in Brecksville. Last year, he dissolved that partnership to open his newest venture, **Eddie's Pizzeria Cerino**.

Eddie's is truly a family project. Son **Ed Jr.** serves as general manager, and daughter **Elise** keeps the books. Cerino's wife **Elisha**, a professional photographer, does all the photography for the restaurant's Web site.

Cerino's upscale pizzeria is a welcome addition to this neck of the woods, as the multi-aged crowds attest. Come on any weekend night and you'll likely have to wait a while for a table (about half an hour on a recent visit), especially since Eddie's takes reservations only for parties of eight or more.



KYLE LANZER/SUN NEWS
Primo pesto pizza
Rigatoni alla Bolognese

It's a situation Cerino hopes to have remedied by Thanksgiving, when his much-needed expansion into the space next door is complete. The new space will house a full bar (Eddie's currently serves beer and wine) and provide additional seating.

"We've been blessed," Cerino states gratefully. "We've been successful right out of the gate."

What has people flocking to this restaurant at a time when consumers are cutting back and eating out less? Cerino attributes it to his commitment to give customers bang for their buck.

Cerino uses only high-quality ingredients, such as imported tomatoes, and makes all of his sauces, salad dressings, and pizza dough from scratch (a three-day process for the latter).

With salads and pasta dishes available in whole or half sizes, and pizzas available in three sizes (9-inch, 13-inch, and 17-inch), it's easy to sample and share your way through the menu.

Meatball sliders (\$6.95 for four) on homemade focaccia bread are a fun way to start. And you don't have to be a vegetarian to love the flavors of the hand-breaded Parmesan zucchini planks with lemon-pepper aoli (\$6.95).

The Italian chef salad (\$6.50 for a half) that we enjoyed on a recent visit featured a mound of pristinely fresh mixed greens dressed in a light, delightful vinaigrette, and garnished, a mite sparingly, perhaps, with a bit of Provolone cheese and prosciutto.

You can build your own custom pizza, but the specialty pizzas are worth a try. The Mediterranean (\$10.95 for a 9-inch) features a fabulous combination of white sauce, mozzarella and goat cheeses, artichokes, spinach, black olives, and roasted red peppers. With the possible exception of substituting some nice Kalamata olives for the ripe olives, it's perfection. The crispy, light crust is fantastic.

Don't pass up your chance to sample a variety plate of Italian cookies, some of which are baked in house and some of which are baked by Gentile's Bakery in Cleveland (\$2.75 for three; available in larger sizes). They are stellar and super fresh.

Eddie's Pizzeria Cerino is located at 7305 Broadview Road, Suite H, in Seven Hills. Hours are from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Friday and Saturday. Call (216) 236-6007 or log onto **pizzeriacerino.com**.

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