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## Local Businesswoman Wins the World's Largest Tomato Sauce Competition

By *Sophie Braccini*



left to right: John Corsi, his wife Nancy, Aldo Corsi and wife Cathy Corsi with the "Boss of the Sauce prize" Photo provided

Cathy Corsi represents the quintessential Italian-American woman. She was born in Italy, and moved to Oakland with her family at age six. She married an American of Italian descent and raised two daughters. A hairdresser by profession, she moved her Montclair Salon in Moraga in 1980 when she purchased a then rundown building at 910 Country Club Drive. She later added Si Si Caff•to her business, a quaint neighborhood favorite for cappuccino, smoothies and little munchies where school kids, cyclists and local families love to hang out.

As any real Italian mother, Corsi has always loved to cook; one of her family's favorites is her spaghetti sauce. The recognition of her talents is what drew her brother-in-law, John Corsi, to ask her assistance in the "Boss of the Sauce" competition. The contest, opened only to restaurants, is hosted by FIERI, an international organization that works at preserving the Italian culture and encourages the study of Italian and Italian American history. Every year, in celebration of Italian culture and cuisine, FIERI hosts the world's largest tomato sauce competition in San Francisco. Restaurants present their sauce to the attending general public in elimination rounds and then a panel of celebrities does the final judging. This year, on Sunday November 2nd, Cathy Corsi won first place for her brother-in-law's restaurant, "Blazing Saddles" of Santa Rosa.

Corsi does not want to divulge all the secrets of her recipe; she plans to

compete again next year. She confesses using a much simpler recipe than some of the other competitors. "I saw one cook making his sauce out of short ribs, it was more like ragu." Corsi uses simple, high quality ingredients such as onions, garlic, parsley, hamburger, sausage, tomato sauce and paste, but not much more. "I come from Northern Italy," she says, "we do not use spices like oregano." Corsi never plans to open a restaurant, "I'm happy that my brother-in-law uses my recipe in his restaurant," she says, "for me cooking is what I love to do, but not at a business level."

Reach the reporter at: [sophie@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:sophie@lamorindaweekly.com)

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