



Italian eatery concept recommends MenuTrinfo

Squisito Pizza & Pasta®, a neighborhood Italian eatery concept that has grown to nearly a dozen locations in Maryland and is now expanding into the franchise arena, was looking for a company to analyze its menu items and provide nutritional information for its customers. So owners Gennaro and Michele DiMeo turned to MenuTrinfo,™ LLC, for that help, and they've been extremely pleased with the results.

MenuTrinfo, LLC, owned and operated by Betsy Craig, with a staff of nutritional experts on hand, specializes in providing nutritional analysis and other services for restaurants.



Michele DiMeo
*President,
Squisito Franchise
Enterprises, Inc.*



Betsy Craig
*CEO,
MenuTrinfo, LLC*

The MenuTrinfo staff went to work electronically gathering and analyzing lists of ingredients and quantities Squisito used in its recipes. “Betsy broke down for us the nutritional information, so we were able to not only use it for our website for our customers, but also to create a nutritional manual for each of our locations, so this way, if customers come in and they want to know the nutritional breakdown of a dish, we have it on hand,” Michele said.

Allergen Advantage

And for customers who are allergic to a particular ingredient, Michele said, MenuTrinfo has also given Squisito the ability to do a reverse lookup, so now their managers can quickly identify which menu items contain that ingredient and make an informed decision about what to serve and what not to serve those customers.

Deep recipe dive

“We wound up changing a lot of our recipes, Michele said. “Actually it was a pretty interesting story — the first round of nutritional information we got, both Gennaro and I almost had a heart attack when we saw the calorie levels and fat levels, and we right away said ‘stop!’ and Gennaro went back to the drawing board and changed almost every recipe,” she said. “We swapped out a lot of [ingredients] in each recipe that were higher in fat and calories for items that were healthier and that would produce a better end result for the customer” Moreover, Michele said: “It actually

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Betsy Craig, left, of MenuTrinfo, with Gennaro and Michele DiMeco of Squisito.

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prompted a whole change of our menu, too, because instead of having lunch and dinner portions, we now offer to our customers *medio* and *grande* all throughout the day, which are smaller portion sizes. ... And then the second thing is it also prompted us to add a whole 'nother area on our menu called Mangia Healthy, which are dishes of 700 calories or less." The menu revamping is right in step with Squisito's slogan "Eat well, eat Italian®."

Why choose MenuTrinfo?

The DiMeos knew they could have tried a do-it-yourself software solution instead, but they determined that it would be far more cost-effective to engage MenuTrinfo as a full-service specialist. "We don't have the manpower do that," Michele said. "We have 13 restaurants and we're getting ready to launch franchises, and if it's easier to outsource something ... and to have somebody do something in a field that they know more about than we do, it's usually more cost-effective and a whole lot more efficient than trying to do something in-house that we're not experts on. ... It wouldn't even be the cost of the software. It would be the time to train somebody to do the work, which makes no sense. Timing-wise it would probably be three times longer than what it took MenuTrinfo to do the work."

Sourcing and adding products

Another benefit of relying on MenuTrinfo's expertise, Michele said, is that "It makes customers feel better that there's a nutritional company that's behind us and it's not just us creating these numbers." Also, she added, "Betsy's got good relationships with manufacturers and distributors, so if there's an item we don't know, she can go to a U.S. Food or a Sysco or whatever and help out by getting that label, so it was very easy."

Ongoing nutritional resource

So would Squisito recommend MenuTrinfo's services to other restaurants? "Oh, absolutely, are you kidding?! I mean Betsy is – she's phenomenal," Michele said. "And it's funny because not only was she a professional resource, but we've actually become really good friends. And she's very attentive to detail, like I am. ... They're fabulous. I would definitely use them again. And we're going to continue with the maintenance program, so we are still working with them."

