

Parmesans Wood Stone Pizza Opens in Frankfort

Michael Papandrea, longtime chef in Long Island, New York, wanted to move himself and his family to Illinois and open a new restaurant concept serving wood-burning stone oven pizzas and fresh breads. Capital concerns arose with the issue of purchasing two pieces of real estate, one for the restaurant and one for his family. The SBA 504 loan program allowed him to acquire the restaurant's location, while leaving enough money left over to purchase a house.

Mr. Papandrea, a graduate of the New England Culinary Institute, grew up in an Italian family, learning to cook directly from the garden. When visiting his grandfather's mountainside village in Italy, Mr. Papandrea took note that once a week a huge fire was built, the stone stove was brushed clean, and bread for the week was baked all at once for the entire community. He decided to apply this style of baking to a restaurant concept back in the U.S., and Parmesans is the result.

Parmesans Wood Stone Pizza opened in April. The restaurant features a 6000 lb. wood-burning stone oven. The oven has a stone slab, 12 inches thick, with a seven foot by seven foot cooking surface. They burn cherry, oak, and apple woods, giving dishes their distinct flavor. The oven can be converted into a smoker, which is done every morning to roast barbecue pork and whole roast chickens.

SomerCor partnered with Westbank to finance the acquisition of this 3,600 Square foot facility, which can cater to parties of as many as 500 people. The restaurant will create 14 new jobs.

