



At Detroit Beach Restaurant and Pizzeria in Monroe, Silverio Conte holds a freshly made pan of homemade lasagna. PHOTOS BY REESE BOWLING/MONROE NEWS

60 years

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In time, Joe and his wife, Mary, would take over.

"I started working at the restaurant when I was 11 years old. I was mopping floors, doing dishes and peeling potatoes. By the time I was 13, I was making pizzas," Joe Conte said. "When I got out of college in 1974, my parents needed a lot of help so I started working at the restaurant."

In February 1980, Joe married Mary and together they worked at the restaurant, managing it full time, for more than four decades.

As the couple enters their retirement, a third generation, Peter and his wife, Erica, will continue the family tradition.

For Peter and Erica Conte, that meant relocating from Florida to Monroe.

It's a decision Peter knew would have to be made to keep the legacy alive and honor his grandparents.

Peter talks about being at the restaurant when he was very young because his parents, Silverio Conte and Georgianna Lingar, had no one to watch him.

He said there is a running joking in the family involving an employee, Cheryl Brooks, who is now deceased.

"I would sit on the freezer and I would fire her every day, yelling 'You're fired,'" Peter Conte said, laughing. "There are a lot of fond memories. I worked there through high school and even after high school."

Conte stepped away from the business to pursue a different career but said what he learned while working in the restaurant has contributed to his professional success.

The 45-year-old is excited to be back in Monroe, close to family and working in the family business.

Although the menu is stocked with a variety of pizza and pasta options, for first-time diners, Erica said she would recommend the mostaccioli casserole. Other pasta options include homemade lasagna made with noodles, cheese, meat, hard boiled eggs and sauce and homemade gnocchi.

"We do recommend the pizza," Erica Conte said. "It's unique in its flavor and how it's made. At least try a small if you're coming in for the first time."

Of all the options on the menu, the house specialty pizza is a customer favorite. Toppings include cheese, pepperoni, mushrooms, green pepper, onion and Italian sausage.

"The pizza we offer is unique compared to other pizzas offered in Monroe," Peter said. "It's unique in that we have a brick oven. The pizza is made on a wooden pizza peel with corn meal and then someone has to slide it into the oven. It's a skill. Unlike a conveyor oven where it comes out the other end when it's done, we have to watch our pizzas and turn them halfway through the baking process so that they cook evenly."

Other menu items include sandwiches, seafood, soups, salads, pork chops, BBQ chicken and ribs. Beer and wine is also served.

Since COVID, business has changed and a large percentage of food orders are carried out.

The Conte family recently celebrated its diamond anniversary with a packed dining room filled with family and friends. Many reminisced of days gone by while looking at old family photos.

"We want people to come and dine



Peter and Erica Conte are the new owners of Detroit Beach Restaurant and Pizzeria in Monroe. "I'm overcome with pride to think that I'm carrying on the family legacy. It is overwhelming in a good way," Peter Conte said.



Pictured are siblings, Joe Conte, left, Silverio Conte, Fred Conte, Suzette (Conte) Raymo and Mary (Conte) Read, all of Monroe.



At left: Taken in 1967, the Conte family stand in front of their business, Detroit Beach Restaurant and Pizzeria. Pictured are Fred Conte, left, Silverio Conte, Rita Conte, Pete Conte holding Mary (Conte) Read and Joseph Conte. Suzette (Conte) Raymo stands in front of her mother. At right: Peter Conte hand tossing pizza dough. PHOTOS PROVIDED BY PETER CONTE



in," Peter said. "Yes, the food is good when you have carry out but it's the dine-in experience and getting the food freshly prepared and piping hot off the broiler with the melted cheese or hot from the oven. That's when the product is at its best."

As new owners, Peter and Erica aren't planning to make many changes. They'll focus on serving homemade Italian favorites that has kept the Conte family in business for so long.

"I'm overcome with pride to think

that I'm carrying on the family legacy. I is overwhelming in a good way," Peter said. "It fills my heart with happiness to know my grandparents live on through us now. My Uncle Joe and Aunt Mary's legacy is carried on by us. For me, that's the biggest part."

More information about the business along with hours of operation can be found on Detroit Beach Restaurant and Pizzeria's Facebook page.

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