



In Photo: Joe Loncone, Everson Ferreira, Rosie Scavuzzo, Gabriele Paganelli, Victor Brown, Inacio Dias, Francesca Colussi, Mike Ward (Photo credit: Rick O'Brian)



ALL NATURAL  
INGREDIENTS

PREMIUM EST. 1997 QUALITY

**Paganelli**

# a labour - of - LOVE

Business partners Gabriele (Gab) Paganelli and Rosie Scavuzzo joined forces late 2013, and within a few short months Speducci Mercato, located in the up and coming Design District, became a successful and unique market destination in the west end of Toronto. While Rosie oversees Speducci Mercato and developing the business and brands, Gab maintains the plant and oversees the product at Speducci Mercato.

I arrived for the interview with Rosie and Gab the morning of a Friday the 13th. To most of us, it's a day of bad luck but according to Rosie its good luck in Italy! With a positive vibe to start the day, I was even more excited to get to know the people behind Speducci Mercato.

By: Heather Nahatchewitz, OIMP Marketing and Communications Director

and imported from Italy. Almost as if on cue, a lovely Italian gentleman declared a particular pasta on the shelves came from his hometown.

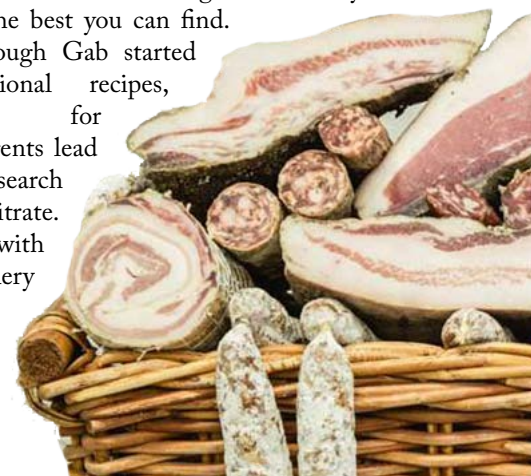
acknowledged, "I was missing my flavours – like pancetta, sausage, salami, and bresaola. It was not available here so I start making it. Back home in Italy, we killed one pig every four weeks over the winter to make these foods for family. I brought the knowledge with me."

Provincially-licensed in 2012, for the current plant now on Sunrise Avenue, Toronto, it's where cured meats are produced for sale at Speducci and other fine foods stores and speciality meat shops.

Gab opened his own place on Front Street in 1997 but

Although the outside of the Mercato (or market) is attractive enough, it does little to hint at the gastronome delights found inside. The place is paradise for anyone seeking authentic rustic Italian foods; from several award-winning salumi, to fresh local meats, to ready-to-go comfort foods. Dry goods line the shelves including pasta, olive oils, sauces, an abundance of items hand-selected by Gab

When products have few ingredients they need to be the best you can find. In fact, although Gab started with traditional recipes, requirements for preserving agents lead him to research a natural nitrate. He worked with different celery products to find the right one for





his recipes, finding a balance between a functional ingredient and the flavour desired.

The salt he uses also makes a difference in the end product. Cervia salt is imported from his hometown in Italy. For 2000 years it's been harvested by hand from the Adriatic Sea by a low-movement co-op. Sweeter than other sea salts, it lacks the bitter minerals that others contain. And the wild fennel is from Sicily. "It tastes real, not manufactured," says Gab. "From the earth."

The great care taken to ensure authentic flavour may be the primary reason first-time entrants Paganelli's walked away with three platinum and one silver award in the 2015 Ontario Finest Meat Competition™.

What's most impressive, the inaugural Diamond Award (best in show), went to their Gentile Salami for having



the highest score of all 150 products across all 14 categories.

"Needless to say we were surprised with the Diamond Award. Gabriele certainly deserves this award, being relatively the new kid on the block and to take back such a prestigious award is definitely overwhelming," says Rosie. "We can't thank the judges enough for their time and recognizing the labor of love that goes into every submission."

When asked whether he expected the big win, Gab shrugged, "It's our basic salami that we used to make at home. It's called gentile because of the name of its casing from the last part of the intestine, but also because it just sounds nice - gentile - gentle. I didn't know if maybe the flavours were too simple."

Although it's a personal favourite of Gab's, it's the wild boar salami that sells the most. It's heartening to know that in addition to sourcing all of his meats locally, he actually raises the boar himself on a farm near Wasaga Beach. About 120 head, "raised in my own way in a nice place."

For good reason, Paganelli is the showcase brand at Speducci Mercato. Rosie explains, "Loblaws has their brand with

PC. We (Speducci) have our brand with Paganelli."

"Gab has an amazing following, his palate is probably the best I've ever had, and I've dined in a lot of places," says Rosie. "His tastes and flavours he brings with him are really from back home. Every time I eat something it tastes like my grandmother's food."

When asked her favourite dish, Rosie laughs, "Anything that he makes is the favourite of the day, until tomorrow comes, then I have a new favourite!"

So how does Speducci get people through the door in such a debatable choice of neighbourhood? "People thought we were crazy opening here early 2012," says Rosie. "But I believe in buying the building and building the business. The area is changing and we are in on the ground floor. That's the best time to enter. What once was all industrial is now known as the Design District. It's just a matter of time until we see condo development."

"Our best marketing is our customers. All word of mouth," Rosie goes on. "We stick to quality, not just the food but everything - service levels, cleanliness of the restaurant, packaging, parking lot, condition of the building, everything is quality. People think quality in terms of products but its more than that - it's everything we do."

Rosie and Gab agree staying provincial allows them to remain artisan and produce quality. "When you grow too big you lose that hand in the production."

That doesn't mean demand hasn't

— Ontario —  
**FINEST MEAT**  
Competition™

**Gentile Salami:**  
Platinum & Diamond

**Fennel Cacciatore:**  
Platinum

**Pancetta Rolled:**  
Platinum

**Lonza:**  
Silver

