

restaurateur

TORONTO

by Peter and Pauls.com

Peter Eliopoulos of byPeterandPauls.com "CREATIVE DIRECTION"

By Birgit Moenke



Photo by Donald L. Pyle, Studio Source Photography

direction he was going to take. When the neighbouring bank to *The Wincott Restaurant* (the first restaurant he owned on the north side of Eglinton between Kipling and Islington) made an offer on the restaurant to use its space for expansion, it was just the turn of events that Peter could creatively capitalize on. Four months later, *Peter and Paul's* was born.

"The secret of happy living is not to do what you like, but to like what you do."

Already experienced in special events and catering to people's needs at the age of 18, what was to become *Peter and Paul's*, in hindsight, was a natural progression. At a time when nightclubs virtually didn't exist in the city, Peter saw a need for organized parties to allow him to socialize with friends and people

Left: Rebecca Gibbon of *SEARCHENGINE* advertising & design.

Below: *Sound Sensation's* team (from right to left): Paul Lionetti, Event Consultant; Rennie Colelli, President; Gianni Grande, Event Consultant; Rose Iantria, Office Manager; Cathy Colelli, Accounts Payable & Receivable; Tony Bertini, Sr. Event Consultant, and Steve Sampaio, Operations Manager.

In 1967, at almost 12 years of age, Peter came to Canada from Greece and began working in the family restaurant business. Days consisted of washing dishes and standing on a milk crate to reach the cash register, when he was able to summon up enough courage to use his broken English to deal with the customers. Although outwardly shy, a passion to create, to do, and to achieve was forming inside Peter, waiting to give him his creative direction.

Interested in doing things differently, Peter remembers the gratitude that came his way from customers impressed with his ability to deliver the paper on time and on a consistent basis. Taking on three paper routes including *The Toronto Star*, *The Globe and Mail* and *The Telegram*, it didn't even cross Peter's mind that it would be too difficult to write each customer a Christmas card—one of the many incidents foreshadowing that one day he was going to stand out from the rest.

Eventually, dabbling in retail by working at *The Forum* led Peter to a more responsible position of managing the new store at Dufferin & St. Clair. However, by continuously returning to the restaurant and entertainment industry, it soon became apparent that it was time to get serious about the creative



Photo by COLLETTI STUDIOS



A step up on the competition, **Bellagio's** Event Venue puts on a great show for every special occasion. On the floor stands **Kostas Marmaras**, General Manager. At the base of the staircase is **Peter Eliopoulos**, Creative Director of **byPeterandPauls.com** since 1982, followed by **Deann Rousseau**, Administrative Assistant; **David Bussoli**, Operations; **Pawan Mahendro**, Chef; and **Rarry Sallai**, "Party Genius."

his own age. Because Peter took it upon himself to sell tickets for rooms of sometimes up to 1,600 people, he also became known for opening the doors for some of the city's well-known disc jockeys. Equipped with a special occasion permit license, two DJs for the evening and the beginnings of a catering operation, Peter only did what nobody else was doing. "I've always found myself wanting to do things because I like to create. People enjoyed what I did, and therefore, it was a rewarding experience."

Peter and Paul's first started at Steeles and

to enlarge the business. Fresh pastries continued to be baked on site, but Peter saw a need for sweet tables and wedding cakes, so the business expanded. Fresh, home-cooked meals inspired by his mother's cooking soon lured in nearby company presidents for lunch. Before long, the business grew into an off-site catering facility to please its regular patrons in their own homes and witnessed the birth of a second 60-seat café back on Eglinton to bring Peter's efforts full circle. Asked back to open up a business close to *The Wincott Restaurant*

products from the restaurant being wrapped up and placed on the counter for sale. With the bulk of products sold at Christmas time, it readily became apparent that a need in the market had been filled. Always busy with the wedding bomboniere, and then gifts for special occasions, *Peter & Paul's Baskets and Gifts* has become a large revenue-healthy company. True to Peter's need to be different, baskets are filled with specialties often individually selected by Peter and his wife, Anna, while on their travels.



Peter & Paul's Baskets and Gifts

Greeted with a smile and perhaps a familiar face, is what you can expect while shopping at Peter & Paul's Baskets and Gifts. With a wide variety of unique designs from festive holiday to corporate promotional, our friendly staff will answer all your questions and be happy to offer creative and innovative ideas for your gift giving needs. As well, our wedding and event division including bomboniere, centrepieces and décor, will have numerous ideas and samples on display.

Call today for our 2001/2002 catalogue, or order on line @ peterandpaulsbaskets.com



Anna Eliopoulos, Director of Client Services of Peter & Paul's Baskets and Gifts.

Keele with a bakery and a little 65-seat restaurant out front. Having started out as *Paul's* bakery, Peter decided to keep the name for a few months until he could find a suitable name to give his business justice. Although he knew the name *Paul's* brought with it a loyal clientele, he did not know that the response to *Peter and Paul's* would grow so strong. With little knowledge of the pastry business, save for black forest cake and a few Greek specialties, Peter relied on the strength of his creative mind

where he started because the landlord liked Peter and his ambitious vision. Peter still wasn't convinced about the name *Peter and Paul's* and decided to call his place *Pierre's*. However, after having spent time developing the retail side in addition to the wholesale side and such a loyal following, it became clear that the name *Peter and Paul's* was too familiar to change.

Gourmet gift baskets for sale followed soon after, starting very simply with the gourmet

"The biggest part for me is the final product. When the whole thing works, you feel creatively fulfilled and it brings you pleasure."

Having been in control of his creative direction from the beginning, it was only a matter of time before the catering and event planning that Peter knew so well would encompass all the different aspects that made the experience for each customer not only easy,

but also turned it into a special memory. It made more sense to Peter to create disc jockey, video and décor companies under *byPeterandPauls.com*'s wing, than to constantly refer people out to independent sources. Knowing that the success of each *Peter and Paul's* event depended on detail-oriented organization, Peter knew that 100 percent control over all aspects would decrease the odds of anything going awry.

With the experience to **WOW** you (*take into consideration Peter's resume, which includes having founded the King's Valley Golf Course and then moving on to open Paparazzi, the club that restarted Toronto's passion for nightlife*) you can rest assured that you will get **THE PARTY OF YOUR LIFE!** *CityTV, CBC, and CFTO News* each covered *Paparazzi's* 1989 opening, a new, technologically advanced concept that captured Toronto, and had it booked for months! With interactive personnel communicating with computers, it was a spectacular time in the city's history. With that in mind, forget about running from one end of the city to the other, and visit *byPeterandPauls.com*, which has become *the* specialist in event planning. Come in, sit down and relax while you discuss your budget, your plans, your hopes and your dreams. *byPeterandPauls.com* takes care of every last detail, whether it is an indoor or outdoor, conservative or huge blowout affair. Not only do Peter and his team offer great advice, they also have all the services you'd ever want at your fingertips:



Welcome to *The Manor* at *Carrying Place Golf & Country Club* where you will be the guests of *Peter & Paul's* (from left to right) *Cathy Reale, Event Director; Melissa Samborski, Operations Manager; Thea de Groot, Event Coordinator; and Peniel Cherian, Executive Chef.*

Round, round, get around, they get around town in their PT Cruisers. *tabletalk's* Catering and Special Events group includes (from left to right) *Laurie Bernardi, Event Coordinator; Andrea Rank, Director of Corporate Events; and John Ristich, Kitchen Manager.*



Photo by Donald L. Pye, Studio Source Photography.

- *tabletalk Catering and Special Events*—food, supplies, tents, valet parking—providing for all the details of a great event.
- *The Manor*—event venue: a spacious facility at *Carrying Place Golf & Country Club*, about 33,000 square feet with three floors and three rooms that can be divided into smaller rooms for conventions; overlooks a six-acre pond—lower and middle floor walks outside—located north of King Township.
- *Bellagio Event Venue*—three-room facility for groups of 500, 200 and 100 respectively—conveniently located in Vaughan.
- *Peter & Paul's Baskets and Gifts*—specialty baskets and gifts, bomboniere, centrepieces, event décor.
- *Sound Sensation*—DJ Entertainment.
- *Colelli Studios*—Photography and Video.
- *Paganini*—Manufacturer of Exquisite Furniture; millwork co.
- *SEARCH ENGINE*—advertising & design.
- *Velvetropo*—Film television and new media.

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And if that wasn't enough to keep Peter Eliopoulos busy, there are more ventures he's undertaken to fulfill his love of a challenge to create new stores, find new loca-

tions and do what he loves to do. On his way to fulfill his boyhood dream of owning and operating a franchise that starts in Toronto and spreads globally, Peter has started by opening two locations of *Nikkos Mediterranean Grill* in Woodbridge and in Newmarket. "Nick," Peter's middle and his father's first name, inspired the chain's moniker. Also the name given to the son in the film "The Greek Tycoon," Peter liked the way it sounded and gave it an extra "k" just to give it a little more attitude.

Serving up a little energy food with attitude at **326 PUMP**, the actual phone number of the café in *Extreme Fitness* at 407 and Yonge St., Peter has plans to add a second location to his portfolio very soon.

experience based on the traditions time has overlooked. With chapels on site, wedding party processions will follow the bride and groom from the church to a special garden on the grounds replicated from the many beautiful ones found worldwide—whether Japanese-inspired, English, Italian etc. Based on the interests of each couple, the bride and groom will lead the procession in a horse-drawn carriage, or perhaps glide across the water at the skilled hands of a gondolier. Surrounded by the serenity of the exquisite gardens, lakes and ponds, golf courses and various other facilities that allow guests to really enjoy themselves, the *Village* will offer Canada something never seen before, but also some-

ers pleasure, and by doing so, feels fulfilled. Surrounded by a staff he appreciates, and loved ones that bring him joy, his reply to being asked what the ticket to happiness is was defined as a combination of things that included good health and being surrounded by family. "When you put these two elements together and work in an environment where you are able to look forward to go to work every day, the whole big picture becomes your happiness."

Having made plans to move his daughters Katherine, Angela and Nicole to Greece to study in Athens, Peter exemplifies the importance that technology melded with tradition plays in his life. With a desire to "inject a little Europe" into his



Photo by COLE U STUDIOS



Photo by John Anthony

A stately gentleman, standing at attention to wait on you hand and foot, *The Manor* is located amidst picturesque countryside where brides step ever so carefully while holding their veils, on a pond where swans swim gracefully, and where the sound of golf balls hit across the green are heard in the distance. Located at *Carrying Place Golf & Country Club*, *The Manor* is also open Sunday mornings for brunch. To sneak a peak, visit byPeterandPauls.com.

Koukou, his toy store in Greece, allows him to work in his beloved homeland, as does *Peter & Paul's Imports*, a great excuse to travel and do business at the same time.

And for those not as fortunate to travel abroad to the extent Peter does, his next big project involves bringing the world to Canada. Excited about his newest creative venture, *Peter & Paul's Village* will incorporate a whole village in the wedding plans of couples interested in the comforts of modern technology enhancing a wedding

thing for posterity, which makes Peter very proud.

"It's my chance to give something back to the world. Something that will be enjoyed by generations to come. Something that I was able to create and leave behind."

The passage of time is something Peter is very conscious of, and something he has plans to do in a very meaningful way. He has chosen to create a life that brings oth-

children, he is looking forward to doing a little more travelling this year outside of the country to show his children parts of Europe where they can experience a different lifestyle, and appreciate the advantages that a life with creative direction can offer.

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