



Don't Think Corporate, Think Human Beings

By Krisztina Kincses Vida

When talking about his business and philosophy of success, Raju Adhikari mentions that one of his favorite movies is the *Field of Dreams*. He talks about his customers as if they were family members and speaks of his desire to always offer them the best—a great variety of expertly prepared food at fair prices with a heartfelt smile on the side. For Raju, “If you build it, they will come” has special meaning

Raju and his wife Silva Coban have been building “it”—Café Amore—since 2002 and “they”—the customers—keep coming back for breakfast and lunch, many of them several times a week, some of them nearly every day. Where previous proprietors might have seen an ordinary corporate cafeteria, this husband-wife team had the vision of a dining facility where customers come to delight in their food, expecting choices, quality, and friendly service.

Chefs with ethnic specialties

Café Amore is a corporate dining establishment with six locations at various corporate parks in central New Jersey. Just one quick glance at the daily menu and you know that this place is not your ordinary corporate cafeteria. One of the first strategic decisions Raju and his wife made was to hire a diverse group of chefs with specific skills and expertise in ethnic foods. This simple but powerful move has allowed Café Amore to be able to provide the kind of variety to customers in their own office building that they might otherwise only find at a larger food court or on a busy main street.

“The reason people go outside of their building for lunch is because one day they want Italian, the next day they may crave Indian and so on,” Raju says. “Lunch in your cafeteria doesn’t have to be frozen food or only sandwiches, so we decided to offer Middle Eastern, Italian, French, South American, Indian choices along with the American favorites.”

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In addition to custom-made deli sandwiches, Café Amore offers kabobs, hummus, calzones, quesadillas, vegan burgers, paninis, roast pork, flank steaks, fish entrées, gluten free items, and a lot more.

“What our customers love about us is the variety of food we offer them,” Raju says adding that every hot meal is prepared by professional chefs which is one of the reasons Raju believes he and his wife have been able to succeed in the corporate dining field where many others have failed before them. “Don't think corporate, think human beings,” he says.

Bringing culinary and business expertise together



Raju's background in the foodservice industry comes from many years spent working long hours seven days a week at country clubs and Silva has significant experience in the franchise business. They were lucky enough to meet when they were both ready to take on the challenge of starting an entrepreneurial journey by combining their culinary and business knowledge.

Silva brings a very disciplined approach from the franchise world to successfully manage all the merchandising, buying, and catering side of the operation, while Raju's passion for customer service helps him excel at understanding culinary trends and motivating his staff every day to delight customers.

“I want to know what people in our office building pack for lunch, what drinks they have in their hand,” says Raju. “I observe everything so I can design the menu and the drink choices to please my customers.”

As a result of researching corporate dining trends and purposefully responding to customer needs, Café Amore offers a very “visual service” allowing diners to see exactly what their

choice are. They are also open until 4 pm which is unusual in most corporate facilities since the majority of revenue is generated between noon and 1:30 pm. Raju and Silva, however, believe that in order to demonstrate their dedication to their customers, these extra conveniences go a long way in gaining their loyalty and business.



In tough times, treat customers even better

Like most businesses, Café Amore also experienced the ripple effects of a crumbling economy over the last several years. Layoffs in their buildings and increased concern for financial security might have made the regular lunch crowds smaller, but the economic challenges did not affect the portion size or quality of service for Café Amore customers.

“When the financial crisis hit, we made a conscious decision to keep the quality of the food the same it had always been, give people more food rather than less, and we never let any of our employees go,” Raju says. “People appreciate when you do the right thing.”





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(l to r) Jim Taskalos, AFI; Silva Coban and Raju Adhikare, owners



Private Parties
Corporate Events
Special Occasions

Raju Adhikare
Owner, Corporate Cafe Developer

Silva Coban
Owner, Operations/Catering

Jim Taskalos,
Business Development Manager
Performance Foodservice - AFI

LOCATIONS

Cafe Amore
33 Wood Ave South
Iselin, NJ

Cafe Amore @ Allendale
1 Route 17 South
Saddle River, NJ

Cafe Amore @ Metro View
333 Thornall Ave
Edison, NJ

Cafe Amore @ Cross Roads
One International Blvd
Mahwah, NJ

Cafe Amore @ Lyndhurst
160 Chubb Ave
Lyndhurst, NJ

[www. CafeAmoreCaters.com](http://www.CafeAmoreCaters.com)