

## It's a wrap? Not for this Melbourne franchisee

As the first franchisee of the fresh and tasty sandwich wrap group Trios, Pat Guarnaccia has experienced a rollercoaster ride to get to where he is today. Now, with his business in Melbourne's popular Highpoint Shopping Centre booming, Guarnaccia is considering a second outlet.

"I love what I do and enjoy working with my staff to serve fresh, wholesome food to the community ... but I still have more plans up my sleeve so it's not a wrap just yet," he said.

The 34-year-old married father of two, with a third child on the way, worked as a chef for over 15 years in Melbourne's hospitality industry before joining Trios in late 2002.

"It was a little bit daunting becoming the first Trios franchisee. I had to grow with the company and there was nothing to compare my experiences to; but looking back, it was the best life-altering decision I've made," Guarnaccia said.

The founders of the 'fresh and tasty' concept, brothers Elias, Sam and David Elia were long term friends, making Guarnaccia's decision a little easier.



Trios staff members Jeannette Bayley (left) and Jennifer Chircop (right) with Pat Guarnaccia, Trios' first franchisee.

"The Elia brothers are savvy entrepreneurs. I knew the business would help me to grow my wealth and learn a lot at the same time."

From his experience in the food service industry, Guarnaccia could see that Australians wanted fresh and healthy food that tasted great and also satisfied the appetite.

Trios launched during the healthy food boom and has built a strong customer base by providing a wide variety of fresh and healthy Laffé Wraps™, salads and baked spuds with a selection of world inspired fillings and dressings.

"I've managed to make a tidy sum being a Trios franchisee but best of all I now have a great deal of balance in my life and that's one of the greatest rewards that comes with being your own boss.

"I have reduced my working week to around 35 hours in the

shop and can now take my daughter to school and spend quality time with my family in the evenings and on alternate weekends.

"It also means a lot to me that my children will grow up appreciating the importance and the benefits of eating healthy food and that their dad is supplying the community with tasty, nutritional meal options.

"It's one thing to make a good return but it is also important to believe in what you are doing as a franchisee," Guarnaccia said.

Guarnaccia believes the rapid growth of the franchise industry is due to everyday Australians wanting to be in control of their own destiny and working hard to achieve that goal.

"My advice to those interested in becoming a franchisee is to do your research before you invest in the company. Have a long hard think about whether it's something you can see yourself doing day in and day out and ultimately enjoying. You have to recognise the benefits in the product or service and feel comfortable selling it.

"Being a franchisee can be very rewarding but you have to be prepared to put in the hard yards to ensure the business gets off on the right foot."

Trios has 12 outlets in Victoria and one in New South Wales with a second to open in Sydney soon.