

Diane Becker
Communications Director

dbecker@ci.norfolk.ne.us

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"Dine Small this Holiday Season"



Rami and Tina Ibrahim in their restaurant, Napoli's, in downtown Norfolk.

Rami Ibrahim likes everything about operating his small business -Napoli's Italian Restaurant- in downtown Norfolk.

"The people are very friendly. I'm very lucky to be in Norfolk," Ibrahim said.

November 26, 2016 is Small Business Saturday and the U.S. Small Business Association is partnering with the National Restaurant Association to encourage people to eat at local restaurants like Napoli's that weekend.

Ibrahim had always wanted to own his own restaurant having learned to cook many dishes growing up in an Italian family in New Jersey. He had also worked in the restaurant business in New York and New Jersey for over 20 years before heading to Nebraska.

The Ibrahims opened up their restaurant at 311 Norfolk Avenue six years ago. They had a restaurant in Columbus for a year before visiting Norfolk to see if there was a larger space available. Candace Bossard with the Norfolk Area Development Council and the City of Norfolk Economic Division found different properties

around Norfolk and introduced the couple to Dan and Connie Geary. The Gearys helped them get set up in their current location - in the first floor space of the former Hesteds building next to Serendipity.

Ibrahim said downtown Norfolk has gotten busier since they first opened. With seven employees, he and his wife do most of the cooking, making homemade sauces, cannoli, pizza and their signature dish- tiramisu.

“It’s very pretty downtown and it’s getting busier. The beginning is really tough but people are patient. I wish I had more time to get out and thank people for supporting us,” Ibrahimi said.

The restaurant is open from 11:00 am to 9:00 pm on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday. It is open from 11:00 am to 10:00 pm on Fridays and Saturdays and is closed on Mondays.

According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, nine out of 10 restaurants have less than 50 employees and 80 percent of restaurant owners start their careers in entry level positions.

“Small Business Saturday is a perfect opportunity to visit the great restaurants in the area and let the owners know that we’re happy to have them in our community,” said Bossard.

For more information go to <https://www.sba.gov/about-sba/sba-initiatives/small-business-saturday>