

About

Vito Giambalvo is a Sicilian American born in St. Louis, MO to a second-generation mother and father. He is the chef and creator of the series “Vito’s Italian Cucina”, an Italian cooking show that makes cooking Italian food fun, easy and nutritious. Vito’s recipes are taken from his family’s favorites, simplified to accommodate today’s busy lifestyles.

His trademark is his comedic style and entertaining format. In addition to cooking, Vito hosts young and teen chefs and opens the Cucina up to a variety of undiscovered and aspiring artists who will visit and perform on the show and enjoy what is prepared that day.

Vito learned to cook “mostly by eating” what his mother, grandmother and aunts made. He remembers his aunts making 50 kinds of cookies for Christmas and a twenty-foot long table of dishes that his entire family would feast on.

Early Life

John, his grandfather, who arrived from Sicily as a young man, owned a produce market in downtown St. Louis and his Aunt Grace owned a bakery. His family lived in a building with aunts, uncles, cousins and grandparents in the different units. Vito attended Catholic schools and was an altar boy.

He wishes he had listened closer, as his parents only spoke Sicilian when they did not want the kids to understand what they were talking about. Growing up in a big Italian family was definitely ideal, “I never ran out of friends to play with, because they were all my cousins and they were always around, and every week there was a wedding or family get together. Food was the center of our lives and there was always something cooking”.

After high school, Vito worked at CBS affiliate KMOX as a stage manager and directed the children’s show Mr. Patches. He also opened two Pizza Parlors, “Paisano’s Pizza”, which he sold when Uncle Sam came calling.

Career

When he came to Los Angeles from Missouri in the mid-seventies, his first work for the studios was on Norman Lear’s “All in the Family” as a camera operator. Vito worked on several other sitcoms including “One Day at A Time”, “The Jeffersons”, “WKRP”, “Newhart”, “Murphy Brown”, “Married with Children” and “Growing Pains” to name a few. He was chosen to play roles on “Murphy Brown” and “Growing Pains”, and co-wrote the episode “Chairman of the Bored” for “The Jeffersons”.

Along with his writing, Vito performed stand-up comedy until he realized that life on the road as a traveling stand-up, was not as nearly as exciting or fun as it had seemed.

He returned to L.A., to resume his work in television and motion pictures. Vito started the production company Creative Teamwork Productions, Inc. in the early 90's with his wife and creative partner, Norrita May.

Most recently, he was nominated for Best Director at the BET Awards for "My Wife and Kids", and directed episodes of "Girlfriends" and "The Game". The 2006 movie he produced and directed, "Let Me Count the Ways", won Best Picture Audience Award at the NY Film and Video Festival, and his short film "Hi Fly" was selected to premiere at the Taos Shortz film festival in 2011.

La Cucina

Although he continues to work in the television and motion picture business, his passion has turned to the food of his family and his Sicilian/Italian roots.

His new production, under the umbrella of Creative Teamwork Productions, Inc. and Ciao 4 Now! Productions, is the cooking show "***Vito's Italian Cucina***", a series hosted on Topchef.com the social network.

"***Vito's Italian Cucina***", features family recipes made easy, that everyone can prepare and enjoy. His recipes are taken from favorites he enjoyed as a child, with his large extended family. The food prepared by his mother, aunts and grandmothers who crafted cooking and feeding the family at weddings, funerals and holidays into an art, and those he made when he owned the Pizza Parlors in St. Louis, are the inspiration for his recipes.

Vito's Italian Cucina can be seen online at www.topchef.com and at the website: www.vitositaliancucina.com.