

# Two Guys Kitchen opens in East Naples

Two guys walk into a restaurant.

It's not a joke. These two guys are serious — local brothers who teamed up to start a restaurant, Two Guys Kitchen & Catering, in East Naples.

The 20-seat restaurant opened Feb. 5 in River Reach Plaza off Airport-Pulling Road in East Naples. The breakfast-lunch eatery is on the opposite end of the plaza from Dylan's Drafthouse and across Horseshoe Drive from RaceTrac.

The small restaurant business is poised for growth, just as Peter and Larry Falisi's initial objective to secure a long-range commissary kitchen for their catering business grew.

"That was our main concept at the time," Peter Falisi said. "But then once we figured out that we could actually have tables in here, we said, well, why not just open the doors and have people come in?"



**Brothers Peter, left, and Larry Falisi are the two guys behind Two Guys Kitchen & Catering in East Naples. (Photo: Two Guys Kitchen & Catering)**

"We were more looking for a kitchen of our own to keep all of our equipment and not have to worry about boxing everything here and there," Larry Falisi said.

After temporarily renting all around town to feed the catering company they started in October 2015, the brothers settled on a location on the edge of an industrial park and nearby Collier County offices in

East Naples. The idea is to provide breakfast and lunch at a price that's affordable for working-class folks.

"We are trying to stay \$8 to \$12 for lunch so you can come in and be comfortable for people," Peter said. "Most of the restaurants here they target the snowbirds. We're here for the local resident here year-round."

The brothers and their immediate family put many months of personal sweat equity into the place to convert a former dry cleaner into a full-service restaurant.

"The only things we didn't do were the (range) hood and some of the plumbing," Larry Falisi said.

They designed the new space to take advantage of an old sliding door on the side of the building where patrons eventually will be able to pick up catering orders made via phone or online.

"This will actually be the first time where somebody can come in and pick up a catering order, where everything in the past has been delivery," Peter Falisi said.

Expect the Italian-American Falisis, at least fourth-generation cooks on the paternal side of the family, to deliver the goods — especially when it comes to tried-and-true homemade recipes such as chicken parmigiana, a longtime family favorite and crowd pleaser.

"Since day one, our main thing was chicken parm. We would eat chicken parm all the time," Larry said. "That was definitely our number one seller over the last three years. Everyone's favorite."

Two Guys' meatballs also are destined to be legendary. "It's my grandma's old recipe and I just perfected it," he said.

Guests can opt for a three-meatball appetizer (\$6) or a hot meatball sub (\$8.95).

In addition to chicken parm, other in-store lunch entrees (\$7.95-\$9.95) include options such as baked ziti, penne alla vodka, sausage and peppers, and rosemary roasted chicken with yellow rice.

Other appetizers (\$4-\$6) include bruschetta, Caprese salad, and cheese and chicken quesadillas. The lunch menu also features a selection of fresh salads (\$3-\$4 for a side or \$7-\$9 for a full serving) and numerous hot and cold sandwiches (\$5.50-\$11) or wraps (\$6.50-\$8.95), and desserts (\$1.75-\$4.50) such as brownies, cannoli and cheesecake.

"Our everyday breakfast menu is going to be fairly simple. Hot and cold food, whatever you like. Fresh fruit," Larry said.

The breakfast burrito (\$2.50) has been the most popular item for early morning diners, but scrambled eggs (\$3), pancakes (\$4) and breakfast sandwiches (\$4.75) are available too. The breakfast menu also has oatmeal (\$2), bagels (\$2.50), muffins (\$2.75), a granola fruit tart or fruit cup (\$2.50).

Daily specials also are planned for breakfast, brunch and lunch, such as smoked pulled pork topped with mac and cheese between two grilled cheese sandwiches.

"I'll probably smoke barbecue at least once a week," Larry said, planning to alternate various meats such as pulled pork, brisket, ribs, chicken and turkey.

A case at the front counter will have grab-and-go items for breakfast, as well as salads. Next to cold cases with beverages is a space for prepared meals.

“Once we start ramping up, we plan to have pre-made meals in there,” Peter said. “So, people can come in on the way to work, grab something for lunch, or on their way home grab something for the family.”

Although the two guys are the face of Two Guys, their parents — Larry and Sandra — pitch in, too.

“It’s the only family we have in the area,” Peter said. “We grew up in New York and we moved down here in 2005. My father was a New York City police officer. So, he retired and that’s how we ended up down here.”

“When we started, it was called Two Guys because it’s us two, and we just got way too busy so we had to steal those two also,” Larry said, noting that his mother was a teacher. “We try to make it a fun atmosphere where you want to come to work and you enjoy everyone you’re with and you respect everybody.”

The restaurant business also was a major career path change for the brothers, both graduates of Palmetto Ridge High School.

The valedictorian of his high school’s Class of 2009 and a finalist for the Winged Foot Scholar-Athlete Award, Peter, 26, earned a degree in economics from the University of Florida.

“I was working for Merrill Lynch in Jacksonville, transferred to the Merrill Lynch office in Mercato and that’s really how this whole business got started,” Peter said. “Different sales reps would come into the office, buy lunch, give their sales presentation and one day I convinced them to start letting my dad do the lunches for it. So just one thing led to another. Everybody enjoyed the food, I was ready for a change from Merrill, and I said, ‘Hey, maybe we should give this a shot.’”

Peter lined things up with Larry, 24, who was just finishing college with a teaching degree from Florida Southern College in Lakeland. While he had teaching options, Larry decided to put his family first. “Let’s cook,” he said.

The brothers provide good balance for each other with Larry possessing the passion for the culinary side of the business, while Peter brings the business savvy and financial background. Larry plans the menus, while Peter concentrates on marketing and business development.

“We can bounce things off of each other so easily,” Larry said. “I’ve known him for a long time so I already know a lot of the stuff he’s already thinking. So, it’s nice. It’s a good team.”

Two Guys Catering started with the office lunches, grew to breakfast and cocktail events, and then everything from catering delivery to a full setup with servers and bartenders and events such as wedding receptions, birthday parties and private dinners.

“Anything that required food we figured it out and took care of it,” Larry said.

Now they can book smaller private events of 20 to 25 people in their dining area with a customized menu. “We’ll have our beer and wine license also, so that will work out well,” Peter said.

Adding the kitchen and restaurant is just the next step in what they see to be a natural evolution of their growing business. They already have plans for larger spaces and additional locations.

“We have a lot of future plans. We want to try to get into meal prepping,” Larry said.

“We think there’s a lot of opportunity in the area as long as we produce the same quality product, keep the price fair and a good value for people. I think there’s plenty of opportunity to grow,” Peter said.

Two Guys Kitchen & Catering, 1230 Airport-Pulling Road, is open 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays through Fridays, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturdays, and closed Sundays. For more information call 239-784-4177 or go to [twoguyscateringnaples.com](http://twoguyscateringnaples.com).