# Francesco's Ristorante & Pizzeria Named 2026 Best of Florida Award Winner

MAITLAND, FL, UNITED STATES, October 1, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Francesco's Ristorante & Pizzeria, the Sicilian-rooted Italian restaurant on South Orlando Avenue, has been named a recipient of the 2026 Best of Florida Award. The honor caps more than a decade of scratch-made cooking in downtown Maitland. Chef and owner Francesco Aiello has built a menu around wood-fired pizza, house-made pasta, and a fish special that changes with whatever looks freshest that day.

The restaurant's pizza dough is baked in a wood-burning oven that runs at 700 degrees, producing the thin, charred crust the kitchen has built its reputation on since opening in 2012. Pasta sauces are made in-house rather than sourced, and the wine list is curated specifically to pair with individual dishes rather than served as a generic add-on. The kitchen also handles catering and private group dining, extending the same scratch-made approach to office events and celebrations away from the restaurant's dining room.

Aiello's approach traces back to his childhood in Palermo, Sicily, where he watched his father work as a pastry chef before training formally at Italy's Instituto Alberghiero. After moving to Central Florida and working under a longtime mentor in the local restaurant scene, he opened Francesco's Ristorante & Pizzeria in Maitland in 2012. The restaurant has remained family-owned and independently operated in the years since, becoming a fixture on Orlando Avenue and a regular presence in local press coverage of the Central Florida dining scene.

“This award belongs to everyone who has walked through our doors over the years, not just the people working in the kitchen,” said Francesco Aiello, owner and executive chef of Francesco's Ristorante & Pizzeria. “We set out to bring a real taste of Sicily to Maitland, and having the community recognize that after all this time means everything.”

Francesco's Ristorante & Pizzeria plans to continue serving lunch and dinner seven days a week while expanding its catering and private dining offerings in the year ahead. For a restaurant that has spent more than a decade building its reputation one wood-fired pizza at a time, the 2026 Best of Florida Award marks another milestone in a story that started with a single Sicilian kitchen.

For more information click here!

Chef Francesco Aiello

Francesco's Ristorante & Pizzeria
+1 407-960-5533
email us here

This press release can be viewed online at: https://www.einpresswire.com/article/945875002

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.
© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.