

{ Eat well }

restaurant and food news

# From **steak** to **pasta**

## Chef makes **good** on his **culinary** dream

By Kimberly Horg-Webb  
Special to {Talk}

**F**resh homemade dough, sauces made from scratch and the finest ingredients make for mouth-watering Italian dishes at Vida's Pasta House in Hanford. Even though Vida's opened in July 2008, it has an established clientele that keep coming back.

Whether it's the Pasta House Special Pizza with fresh ingredients including sausage, pepperoni, meatballs, peppers and mushrooms or homemade pasta dishes, customers can taste the freshness and quality of the products that are specially chosen for each dish. Owner Hussein Elsharkawy is also the executive chef at the restaurant so he makes sure his food is always top quality.

"I know what I am giving to people

**Vida's Pasta House**  
133 N. 11th Ave., Hanford  
(559) 584-9888

and I take pride in my cooking so I don't use any frozen products," he says.

He feels he has to give customers what they pay for so he chooses to buy the finest Barilla pasta, real fresh mozzarella cheese (not cheese blends) and the best tomato sauce money can buy to make his sauces.

Everything is fresh. In fact, 95% of the items on the menu are made there. The bread and sauces are made every morning and the raviolis and manicotti are handmade.

Elsharkawy has always enjoyed cooking. When he was a young boy he

used to cook in the kitchen with his mom. He has worked his way up over the years; he started out busing tables. Elsharkawy never gave up and knew that one day his dream of owning his own restaurant would come true.

He opened his first restaurant, Vida's Italian Steakhouse, four years ago. He has regulars that have been frequenting his restaurants for years.

"This is my dream," he says. "I don't work for the money; I love cooking. And I love seeing people enjoy themselves."

One of the most popular choices among customers is the chicken tortellini carbonara, made with grilled chicken breast, tortellini, bacon, onion, tomato and cheese in a creamy sauce.

Details: (559) 584-9888.



Hussein Elsharkawy has been a professional chef since 1983. He started out working in a pasta house in New York where he learned a lot of his recipes from an Italian chef with whom he cooked.

Photo/Kimberly Horg-Webb