



Date: March 14, 2008
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For the Love of the Food!

Carrabba's Italian Grill
Opens in Ft. Myers, FL

Carrabba's Italian Grill will open its doors to diners at 4:00 PM on Monday, March 31, 2008. Located at 10075 Gulf Center Drive, Carrabba's features Italian specialties made from original family recipes handed down over generations. The lively exhibition kitchen, fresh from-scratch food, and friendly, knowledgeable staff will make this a favorite neighborhood dinner destination seven days a week.

In keeping with Carrabba's commitment to its communities, the new restaurant will donate a generous portion of opening night sales to The Children's Home Society of Florida.

Founders Johnny Carrabba and Damian Mandola, hosts of the popular PBS cooking show series, *Cucina!* opened the first Carrabba's in Houston, Texas in 1986. Flavorful family recipes and the use of only the finest ingredients have been at the core of the restaurant's success ever since. These passionate restaurateurs have searched the world over for the highest quality ingredients from mussels rope-grown off the coast of Prince Edward Island, to Garofalo pasta imported from a small town outside Pompei, Italy, to Borges extra virgin olive oil from Spain.

"When Damian and I decided to open Carrabba's we wanted to share our enjoyment of great food and our family tradition of generous hospitality, shaped by the kitchens that we grew up in," said founder Johnny Carrabba. "From the very beginning Carrabba's has been a place where good things happen around the table. Life is hectic for everyone these days, but for us a meal is always an opportunity to relax, have fun, and reconnect with family and friends."

More

Carrabba's opens in Ft. Myers, FL

Page Two

Carrabba's signature dishes include crispy *Calamari*, *Cozze in Bianco* (white wine steamed mussels), *Chicken Marsala*, *Filet Fiorentina* and fresh fish cooked over a wood-fired grill. Other long-time favorites include homemade *Lasagne*, *Chicken Parmesan* and handmade pizza baked in a wood-burning oven. A moderately-priced wine list featuring Italian and California vintages complement menu selections.

The inviting Carrabba's neighborhood bistro environment offers several distinct experiences for customers – from the relaxed pasta bar on the edge of the bustling exhibition kitchen, with its wood-burning pizza oven, to the cozy bar, and the family-style tables and intimate booths of the main dining room.

Over the years the restaurants have received a number of media accolades, including: "Carrabba's worth its wait in savory Italian flavors" *Washington Post*; "Menu is a crowd pleaser at Carrabba's Italian Grill", *Miami Herald*; "Mama Mia! Now that's Italian", *Tulsa World*; "Carrabba's Italian Grill does not disappoint." *Detroit Free Press*; "...ay Carrabba's!", *The Detroit News*.

The popularity of Carrabba's led to the PBS cooking show series *Cucina!*, hosted by Carrabba and Mandola, and three companion cookbooks titled *Ciao Y'all*, *Ciao Sicily* and *Ciao Tuscany*, available in bookstores.

Carrabba's will open to the public on March 31, 2008. Managing Partner for Ft. Myers is Matt Fales.

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