

# Celebrity chef brings new Italian steakhouse home to Lake Zurich

**Rick West** Posted March 04, 2024

Celebrity chef Fabio Viviani was in high demand during a preview event Saturday night for [LAGO](#), his new Lake Zurich restaurant.

In between shaking hands and posing for photos with hundreds of guests, Viviani bused tables, helped the kitchen and bar staff members and grabbed a mop at one point to clean up a spill.



Opening restaurants isn't new for Viviani. His group, Fabio Viviani Hospitality, has over 40 concepts nationwide. But this one is special because it's in his backyard.

"This is in my neighborhood, so it's personal," Viviani said. "We got a good turnout, it feels great."

Viviani, who lives in nearby Barrington Hills, held VIP events Saturday and Sunday with wine, cocktails and small bites to introduce the area to the restaurant at 350 N. Rand Road and to prepare for Monday's official opening.

Best known for his appearances on Bravo's Top Chef seasons five and eight, Viviani is a recurring guest on shows including Good Morning America, The Rachael Ray Show, and numerous Food Network Shows, such as Cutthroat Kitchen: All-Star Tournament, which he won.

The 180-seat restaurant in [The Sanctuary on Lake Zurich](#) has a sleek and sophisticated vibe inside and out. A greenery-lined "four seasons patio" can be enjoyed year-round and will be open air when the weather allows.



The menu emphasizes steak but also features fresh seafood, housemade pasta dishes and shareable plates.

Guests are encouraged to start with a selection from the "elevated one bite" section, including Viviani's recommendation of the Steak & Eggs Bite, which features crispy risotto, Wagyu beef tartare and caviar.

Other menu highlights include the prime bone-in rib-eye with roasted garlic and truffle butter, bistecca alla fiorentina, Wagyu short rib Bolognese and double-cut Aurelio's pork chop.

To add some flair, a number of dishes will be prepared or finished tableside, including a



large-format Caprese salad designed to serve two to four people. A specially-trained LAGO staff member will pull, stretch, and cut the fresh Buffalo mozzarella cheese curds at the table before assembling the salad and drizzling it with Italian olive oil and 20-year aged Balsamic.

The wine program includes a carefully curated list of international selections and will also offer a special collection of unique and rare wines from Italy, where Viviani was born. The craft cocktail list will feature 25 handcrafted libations.

Reservations are currently available via [SevenRooms](#) or by calling (224) 848-LAGO.

LAGO isn't Viviani's only new restaurant coming to the suburbs this year. Old-school Italian concept Giostra is expected to open this spring in the space formerly occupied by Incontro A Tavola in [The Arboretum of South Barrington](#).