

A Tale of Two Bakeries coexisting in the Bronx  
Alternative title: Coexisting in a sea of Bronx Bakeries



(Left) Owner, Daniel Calano-Moore in front of Madonia Bakery on Arthur Ave, on Tuesday, January 31st, 2023.  
(Right) Owner, Larry Addeo, in front of Addeo & Sons Bakery (Hughes Ave location) on Monday, February 6th, 2023.

How have two Italian bakeries managed to coexist in a sea of bakeries in the Bronx? Madonia and Addeo Bakery, both positioned within walking distance on Arthur Ave, have served the Bronx neighborhood for generations. Currently, the separate owners: Daniel Calano-Moore and Larry Addeo, thrive on the connections fostered between them and their customers and share a similar perspective about the importance of the function of small businesses in this community.

By Morgan Spillman

For most small businesses in the Bronx, food is life and food is community. From Mexican Restaurants, Albanian delis, French patisseries, and Italian Bakeries, there is no shortage of ethnic cuisine in the Belmont area. Belmont is still considered “Little Italy” because of the large wave of Italian immigration in the 1900s.

Two Italian immigrants from separate walks of life, Mario Madonia, from Sicily, and Gennaro Addeo from Naples, Italy, went on to start bakeries that would live on for generations to come. Madonia Bakery was founded in 1918 and Addeo Bakery was founded in 1930.

Daniel Calano-Moore, the current owner of Madonia Bakery, is the great grandson of Mario Madonia, making him a fourth generation Italian baker. His grandfather, Peter Madonia was literally “born into the business” when his mother unexpectedly went into labor in the back of the kitchen. His great grandfather had a pushcart on Arthur Ave for years until all the bakers in the community began to “share an oven, a market, and ingredients, in a guild called the ‘Reliable Bronx Italian Bakers’”, Daniel said.

Laurence(Larry) Addeo, grandson of Gennaro Addeo, took over for his father in 2001, and is a third generation Italian baker. Larry said he “was raised on food. We talk, think about, and make food...” and claims that food and community is what keeps this neighborhood alive. He said the neighborhood used to be mainly Italian but “now there’s a different immigrant dynamic from Albanians, Mexicans, etc. they also want fresh bread because that’s what they’re used to, our existence is all about food.”





(left) Daniel holding the bakery's Pane Di Casa, a traditional Southern Italian round loaf on Tuesday, January 31st, 2023.



(right) Customers gathered in Madonia Bakery on Tuesday, January 31st, 2023.

1. Tell me the most rewarding part of working in a bakery.

“First, it was seeing customers that have been coming here for generations, now, it’s seeing new people come for the first time...this neighborhood is such a microcosm of Italian Americans, Italians created this neighborhood and it still feels the same as it did then, but a little different.”

2. How is the competition with the other local bakeries? Specifically the ones closest to you...

“Within our community alone, they’re are 5 or 6 within walking distance, we don’t compete directly with each other...we’re not trying to step on each other’s toes, we don’t want to take business away from someone else, without the dynamic of the whole neighborhood each of the businesses suffer...”



(left) Larry holding a Ciccola bread loaf in the back kitchen of his bakery on Tuesday, February 2nd, 2023.



(right) Larry speaking to a new customer and roommate of his regular customer and friend, Ace Mason on Tuesday, February 2nd, 2023.

1. Tell me the most rewarding part of working in a bakery.

“Our customers who come to the store and do wholesale business, people who have been coming with their great grandparents, and when those people say: ‘I’ve been coming here forever’, I get a thrill from that.”

2. How is the competition with the other local bakeries? Specifically the ones closest to you...

“There’s no competition between us as much as turnover, we do favors for each other, if we need flour, we lend each other stuff, the competition is moreso between the customers, like some customers will say ‘I won’t go to Madonia’.”





(left) Ace Mason, a frequent customer at Addeo and friend of Larry, posing in the store at the Hughes Ave location on Tuesday, February 2nd, 2023.



(right) Andy Bony, a frequent customer at Madonia Bakery on Arthur Ave on Monday, February 6th, 2023.

Why do you choose to shop at Addeo Bakery?

Ace Mason: “I come here for the great hefty bread and we are like family, nobody is like this, nobody’s better, I’m only happy here because the prices are different, I’ve been coming here since I was a kid with my family, and even if I move to Florida, I would still come here.”

Why do you choose to shop at Madonia Bakery?

Andy Bony: “Nice ladies work here and I always go to the meat shop next door, so coming here is convenient. The big round loaves of bread are usually warm, and it’s right next door.”



Both Addeo and Madonia Bakery pictured on Arthur Avenue.

1. Why is having so many local bakeries and businesses important to the community?

Larry: “This neighborhood has things that used to exist in all neighborhoods, a butcher, grocer, seafood, and you know the people, you knew the person who cut your bread, your meat, you had a relationship with them, you had a sense of community, I talk to everyone about business, you just have a connection with people...”

Daniel: “Most of our daily customers are here before 7 a.m....the outer boroughs are where the most dynamic vibrant cultural communities are. We all know who our neighbors are, we support each other, and these kinds of communities exist all over the city.”

Both Larry and Daniel plan to continue these bakeries for as long as they can, despite not having offspring to pass the torch to.

Despite neighborhoods constantly changing, “as long as the merchants and communities around it support [this neighborhood], it’s not going to go anywhere, it’s still here and big, we even survived a second pandemic...”, Larry said.