



PHOTO BY LINDA SANDSMARK

CostaCo's Restaurant Equipment owner Dino Fakaros sells new and used restaurant equipment to the public.

By Linda Sandsmark

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A huge warehouse store full of new and used restaurant equipment is open to the public in San Leandro, with prices a restaurant owner or home chef would love.

Costa Co's Restaurant Equipment has been a family business for 20 years. It is owned by Dino Fakaros, who works there with his wife Diane and son Paul.

The Fakaros family is very knowledgeable about the restaurant business, and their company carries just about everything a restaurant needs to thrive.

"I used to have a restaurant and bar in San Francisco for 15 years, but then the small building we were in was demolished and they put up a high-rise," says Dino.

“I put my restaurant equipment in storage and took a little sabbatical. After six months, I decided to start selling my equipment. And from that beginning, little by little, we decided to make this our business.”

The company serves mainly family-owned restaurants, churches, schools, and other institutions. They also welcome home chefs, especially those who want to do quantity cooking. Much of the equipment comes from liquidations when restaurants close. (Any used items are cleaned and refurbished before resale.) In addition to buying and selling used equipment, the company has also arranged restaurant equipment auctions

“I’d say 80 percent of our customers prefer used equipment due to the economy,” says Dino. “I also do business with the manufacturers of new equipment if people want to buy something new.”

A trip through CostaCo’s 15,000 sq. ft. warehouse is awe-inspiring — row upon row of refurbished pizza ovens, chicken rotisserie units, grills, stock pots, meat slicers, ice cream cases, barware, ice machines, bakery and deli equipment, dishes, and of course fridges, freezers and ovens. Everything is well-priced, because the Fakaros family knows that restaurateurs and home cooks have had a hard time these last few years.

“We love to deal with people, but we don’t pressure them,” says Dino. “We always tell customers, ‘Your family is our family.’ It’s a beautiful business, working with people and the new and used equipment.”

The first CostaCo store was located at Eden Landing in Hayward. Once established, they decided to enlarge a bit and bought a building on Mission Boulevard. They remained there until two and a half years ago, when I-238 was widened through Hayward and their store was taken by eminent domain.

Diane says, “We moved to San Leandro because it’s centrally located, there are nice buildings around us, we have a very nice landlord, and it was the right size.”

CostaCo’s name comes from Constantine, which is Dino’s formal Greek name, and “Costa” is the Greek nickname for Constantine, and Co is for company.

“We’re a mom and pop store, but pop is the principal,” says Diane.

Restaurant Supplies on the Menu

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CostaCo's Restaurant Equipment is located at 954 Aladdin Ave., San Leandro, near Teagarden Street. Store hours are Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call 614-9211 (fax 614-9210) or e-mail dino@costacosequip.com. The company's website is www.costacosequip.com.