

# susan & francesco milana

BY JAN DAVIS

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Do opposites attract? Well, in this marriage they certainly do. Susan Milana is a beautiful, blonde successful businesswoman; her husband, Francesco Milana, is a creative, dark-haired handsome Italian chef. And you can still see the sparkle in their relationship after thirteen years of marriage.

Francesco is a local caterer known as “The Singing Chef.” He’ll come to your home and prepare a gourmet meal right in your own kitchen — and he’ll do it while serenading your guests with beautiful Italian arias. Fun? With the personable Francesco, it is always fun! He is also the wedding chef for the Hoyt House Bed & Breakfast and he is the guest chef for a luxury rental home in The Residence. The house is owned by Quintes, an organization that owns high-end resort homes around the world. Francesco prepares meals for the well-traveled guests who visit and provides a total dining and entertainment experience during their stay.

Francesco grew up in Sicily and immigrated to Canada at age 15. His cooking skills were honed during years in the family kitchen, working with an uncle’s catering business, and studying at the Lorenzo de’Medici Culinary Institute in Florence.

Fourteen years ago, he was a partner in a popular Toronto trattoria called Vivolo’s that just happened to be across the street from the condo where Susan lived. At the time, she was a vice president with PepsiCo and in charge of human resources for Pepsi’s Canadian Pizza Hut division. So it was natural that, after a long day, she would regularly pop into Vivolo’s for dinner. The chemistry was there from the beginning, and Francesco happily began singing while preparing her supper. “O Sole Mio” became “their” song. At their wedding, it was sung by the tenor from the Canadian Opera Company.

In the years that followed, Susan was transferred first to Dallas, and then recruited as vice president of human resources for Dollar General in Nashville. This was the 32nd move in Susan’s career and a pattern definitely not suited to a two-career marriage. When both turned fifty, it was time to



stop the relocation and find a permanent home. After a weekend at Amelia Island Plantation and another at The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island, Susan and Francesco made their final move. “How could anyone not fall in love with this place?” she says. They designed their own home—with, of course, a spacious professional kitchen.

And what does a high-powered business executive do on Amelia Island? For the past six years, Susan has used her business expertise as executive director of Communities In Schools, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping at-risk teens succeed in school, graduate, and prepare for a productive life. “Investing in the future of our youth is an investment in our future employees, customers, and neighbors,” she explains, “and it’s an investment that achieves significant, measurable results!”

So the answer to the question about opposites is obvious: the Italian chef and his brilliant blonde are still passionate about each other, and passionate about making a difference, wherever they live! Learn more at [www.singingchef.net](http://www.singingchef.net) and [www.cisnassau.org](http://www.cisnassau.org).