

## Industry Milestone: Peterson's Turns 20!

March 1, 2019

FISHERS, IND. – Award-winning Peterson's Restaurant celebrates their 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in March. This kind of longevity is a huge milestone [considering 70% of restaurants fail after 10 years.](#)

Independent Owner/Operator Joe Peterson shares his experience and insight on what it takes to be independent and successful in the hospitality industry.



### *What originally motivated you to open a fine dining restaurant?*

I used to travel a lot for work and entertained at fine dining restaurants around the country. When the quality of food and service was disappointing, it was an embarrassment in front of clients. My primary business was running well and I wanted to try my hand at owning a fine dining steak house.

### *How does it feel to be celebrating longevity in an industry fraught with failure?*

I'm very proud of our great staff and what we have built over the last 20 years. It proves that if you provide the food quality, management skills, service, and listen to your customers, you can be successful.

### *What was your biggest challenge?*

The biggest challenge was and is staffing. From the kitchen to the table, it takes team effort, honesty, and cooperation. We have an outstanding management team and crew.

### *Why is Peterson's a dinner only destination?*

We focus all our talents on serving one great meal a day, private dining parties and wine dinners. We limit our daytime activities to group luncheons, breakfast meetings and a few special events of our own like the *March Madness Bar Bash*.

### *What do you attribute your success to?*

Our steaks are tender enough to cut with a fork. I've been to high end restaurants where the food is not on par with price - you don't want to spend good money and have a bad meal. You also don't want to hear about a great restaurant and then come in and have a bad experience.

I feel we stand out because we truly do care. We work from the top down to create the best guest experience. We also don't take anything for granted, even with customers who've been coming to us for years. Of all the comment cards I read, almost all are positive. I concentrate on any dissatisfaction and follow through to correct them.



*Joe Peterson testing a personal recipe.*

*The biggest difference between working for an independent over a chain restaurant is actual care for the business and not looking at each guest as a dollar sign.*

—Bradley Phelps  
GM & Bev Dir

We are successful because we listen to our customers and staff about how to better provide what they want, which is high quality food, great service and terrific ambiance. Whether it's a special occasion, business

meeting or social night out – you can take your time and enjoy a wonderful meal with lavish hospitality. That is what’s most important to us.

The bottom line is, treat guests like you want to be treated.

***What advice would you give to someone who wants to open a steakhouse?***

Look to consultants in the industry and read everything you can about successful restaurants in your area. Find out where they buy their food and what suppliers they use. Consult successful experienced Chefs, Owners, and Managers

My first partner was a chef; there’s no way I could have put those initial menus together without him – surrounding yourself with the right people is crucial.

What if your broiler goes out? We have a spare on hand – always have a contingency plan.

***What are your hopes for the future?***

Our customers expect and receive consistency when they come to Peterson’s. They can recommend us to friends and family confident they will be well taken care of. When people say to me, “We were at your restaurant the other night and it was great!” that makes me feel good. I take pride when we earn recognition and awards. Compliments are inspiring!

We are a destination fine dining restaurant in the Indy area. Our number one goal is to make sure everyone feels welcome and has a wonderful experience. We provide jobs for the local community and continue to be one of the best fine dining restaurants.



*Chef & Brad on Indy Style*

*Working for an Independent  
that’s been around for 20 years,  
I get to be hands on and work  
with different products daily.*

*I enjoy coming to work!*

*—Exec Chef Dave Foegley*

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