

CHEERS TO 25 YEARS: CELEBRATING A QUARTER CENTURY

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Whether we're discussing delivery routes, collaborating on design projects, or exploring new products, you'll hear a lot of different things being talked about within the walls of Fortuna. But there's always one saying that pops up a lot around here: "We're going places." It's simple, but it's true. For 25 years, we have had our sights set on growing into the triad and beyond, doing our best to meet the needs of our community and upping our game at every chance we get.

Our CEO, Elisabetta Massa, established Fortuna Enterprises in May of 2000 with a drive to support local, family-owned businesses. The company started as a source for imported goods from Italy that were not accessible through local markets at the time. Armed with a single delivery van and a whole lot of passion, the two-person team — consisting of our current CEO and President — spent the next few years laying the groundwork for what would grow into one of the largest distributors along the East Coast. In 2004, Fortuna purchased its first warehouse to house our growing product offerings, beginning our transition from imported Italian goods to specialty coffee items.

True to the Italian culture, espresso was a staple for many of the establishments we served. Initially, we imported roasted espresso blends for the nostalgia of coffee culture in Europe, but with the steady growth of the business came an interest in fresh, locally roasted coffee. In 2009, Fortuna took the reins of a retiring coffee roasting business, marking the start of our wholesale roasted coffee program, Fortuna Coffee. Careful consideration was made while formulating our signature espresso blend, Sergio's, to ensure the flavor profile aligned with the tastes of our European customer base and to honor the memory of a beloved member of the company.

As Fortuna grew, so did the needs of our clients, sparking the business to take on more services under the company umbrella. Better coffee led to better equipment for producing quality beverages, which in turn created the need for a team who could install and repair these investments. Consultations on cafe layouts, drafted on napkins, prompted the hire of our first interior designer in 2010. Soon followed a procurement team, meant to facilitate the purchase of pieces to furnish these designs, and a graphic designer to take on marketing and printed branding needs.

Despite the challenges of 2020, our staff and product offerings outgrew our previous home, prompting the search for a larger facility. The new 65,000 square foot building provided a consolidated warehouse space and offices for our expanding staff, plus plenty of space for a showroom area, a dedicated training room, a larger service technician workshop, and a new roasting facility. The first project completed in this new space was the front coffee bar, finished in early 2024. Mike's Espresso Bar, named after the late father of Fortuna's founder, greets all our guests as they first step through the front doors. The remaining spaces, including a state-of-the-art roasting facility, are anticipated to be finished by the end of 2025.

We call ourselves the one stop shop for a reason, taking a holistic approach to each project, large or small, by providing our customers with the full scope of services it takes to bring their concept to completion. The food, beverage, and hospitality industry is constantly evolving with the latest trends and market changes, and we take pride in keeping up with those developments to better assist our growing community. We also understand how trends prompt existing businesses to change with the times, and our team is here to help navigate these transformations and make them as seamless as possible.

Fortuna has grown into a very collaborative team, working across departments to achieve our customers' goals. From the initial consultation meetings to training and general support, all facets of our business are meant to elevate the standards of our community and the people they serve. Authenticity and sincerity are crucial to the hospitality business, and we strive to continue upholding that value for many years to come.

We are honored to work so closely with businesses in our local community and beyond, and hope you'll join us in raising our mugs to 25 years of brewed success, together.