

Como for sale, not closing: 'Everything is open and continuing to go on'

Lewiston deli reopened in August

LEFT OF CENTER WITH JOSHUA MALONI

Social media was abuzz this week when it was discovered the Como Restaurant on Pine Avenue is for sale. Would this mean the end of the iconic Italian restaurant?

On Wednesday, manager Dominic Colucci III said, "What we're doing is we're trying to give ourselves options."

"Guys are getting older. We're in COVID-19 world. The Canadian bridge is closed. So, what we're looking to do is we want to put it out there - see what it gives us. It gives us flexibility."

The Niagara Falls flagship's appearance on the open market shouldn't impact the Lewiston deli - which just reopened one month ago.

"We could sell tomorrow; we could never sell. We're staying open here; we're staying open there. None of our locations are closing. And we could always decide to not sell," Colucci said. "As far as the Lewiston deli goes - or any of our locations - everything is open and continuing to go on. We're still taking banquets; we're still taking reservations at our main location."

"And we don't know what it could look like. We don't know what a sale could look like. But the only way for us to find out is to put it out there, and see what offers or options come across our desk."

"As far as the Lewiston deli, it's remaining open - and that's the plan going forward; as well as the (Como Restaurant at the) Airport, and Pine."

The listed price for the Como is \$1.99 million. Colucci said it's too early to say if a prospective buyer would be required to keep the Como, well, the Como.

"It depends on what the person's interested in doing," he



Above, left, the world-famous Como Restaurant in Niagara Falls. (File photo)



At right, the brand-new corner, exterior and clock tower at 555 Center St.,

said. "If somebody wants to continue the restaurant, of course we would want it to be run the same way we run it: with as much love and care and ... all those years we put into it, in generations."

"You know, it wasn't an easy decision and the next person who would possibly take that on, we would want them to have the exact same mindset that we do. If that was the case, I'm sure there would be provisions as far as the business goes, as much as we can do."

"It'd be just like if you are giving a loved pet away: You'd

want him to go to a good home. That's how we would feel about our Pine Avenue location or the restaurant itself."

"But, like I said, we're just putting the option out there. We could decide to go forward or backward. But if we don't put it out there, it doesn't give us that option."

Since 1927, the Como has been owned and operated by the Colucci and Antonacci families.

A social media post suggested the next generation might not be as keen about continuing on in the family business.

"I think it depends on which of us you might be asking," Colucci said. "From my point of view, the (current generation) guys - it's their decision (to sell or not to sell). I'm here for the long haul - whatever way that looks. As long as my family's involved, then I will be, too."

He added, "We want to keep taking care of our customers and giving a good product and staying busy. We're happy to still do that."

"We still love what we do. We're just adapting to the changing world around us."

The Como Deli is located at

555 Center St., Lewiston; the original Como Restaurant & Deli is located at 2220 Pine Ave., Niagara Falls; and the Como Restaurant at the Airport can be found at 10158 Niagara Falls Blvd. For more information, visit <http://www.comorestaurant.com/>.

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