

The MARRAPESE GALA



*Brought to You
by La Prossima*





Event Information

Friday, September 12th
7:00pm

Villa Milano
1630 Schrock Rd. Columbus OH

Tickets

Single Ticket
-\$100,00

Sponsorship Levels

Livello Bronzo
4 Tickets
Half Table
-\$375,00

Livello Argento
8 Tickets
1 Table
Half Page Ad
-\$750,00

Livello d'Oro
16 Tickets
2 Tables
Full Page Ad
-\$1400,00



The Look

You've been spending the fall in Amalfi, and it shows.

Black tie, Italian Fall inspired color palette



The Occasion

An event inspired by Father Casto Marrapese



Now in its second year, The Marrapese Gala is more than an annual event; it is a profound tribute to the enduring legacy of a visionary leader, Father Casto Marrapese. As a pillar of the Italian community and a long-time pastor of St. John the Baptist Italian Catholic Church, Fr. Marrapese dedicated his life to uniting generations of Italian Americans and preserving their heritage. His most notable achievement, the founding of the Columbus Italian Festival in 1980, was born from a desire to foster community pride and connection to cultural and religious values. He recognized the need for a central gathering point where the traditions of the past could inspire a strong future. This vision of a unified community became a cornerstone of his work. Fr. Marrapese was also instrumental in the development of the Italian Cultural Center, a project brought to life through the collective effort and generosity of the community he so passionately served.

Today, The Marrapese Gala honors his spirit of leadership and dedication. Just as he created spaces for connection and celebration, our gala carries forward his legacy by bringing together young Italian Americans and young Italians in Columbus. It is a time to reflect on the rich heritage he helped to preserve while celebrating the vibrant, contemporary culture he inspired. We are proud to continue his mission of strengthening the Italian community, one event at a time.

A Special Thank You

This evening would not have been possible without the tireless dedication of our Marrapese Gala Committee. We extend our deepest gratitude to these individuals for their commitment to bringing our shared vision to life.

- Gabriella Cugini
- Cameron Cua
- Katherine Viviano
- Joanna D'Amico
- Matthew DiCesare
- Kathryn Ruttko
- Grace Elliot





ABOUT

La Prossima

Connecting Columbus to Contemporary Italy

Founded in 2023, La Prossima was established to address a notable void within the Columbus community. We serve as a dynamic nexus for young Italian Americans and young Italians who have found a new home in Columbus. Our mission is to provide a modern, authentic connection to Italy and its vibrant culture as it exists today, bridging the distance between Columbus and the Italian lifestyle.

We believe in strengthening community through shared experiences. Our events are thoughtfully designed to bring people together, from elegant aperitivo and wine tastings to enriching cooking classes that honor our heritage. Our commitment to the community extends to philanthropic efforts, such as our annual tradition of baking cookies for the homeless during the holidays.

In 2024, we proudly partnered with over 10 Italian-owned businesses in Columbus, launching a digital initiative to highlight their contributions to our city. Through 10 distinct events—ranging from cooking sessions with le nonne to watching Italy compete in the Euro Cup—we successfully brought a taste of contemporary Italy to our members.

A key highlight of 2024 was the launch of La Prossima Leaders, a professional development initiative designed to support our members' careers. The inaugural event featured a networking reception and a compelling panel discussion with Italian American professionals in the real estate industry. We are dedicated to continuing this series, with each event focusing on a different field of expertise to support our community's professional growth.

More than an organization, La Prossima is a thriving community. We are dedicated to ensuring that the rich traditions and modern spirit of Italy have a home in Columbus, providing our members with a space to connect, celebrate, and build lasting relationships.



With
Special Guest
Giovanni Castiglione

Born and raised in Solon, Ohio, a suburb of Cleveland, Giovanni "Gio" Castiglione discovered his passion for entertaining at a young age. Gio sings jazz and swing tunes as a soloist, performing on his own, or in front of a big band (Swing City Big Band) or jazz ensemble (1159 Jazz Band). A proud Italian-American, Giovanni also embraces his heritage whole-heartedly, singing "Fratelli d'Italia" (the Italian National Anthem) throughout Northeast Ohio for Italian-American events. He is often a featured soloist performing the U.S. National Anthem at professional sporting and civic events.

