

# CASA SANTO STEFANO

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## **Executive Summary**

Casa Santo Stefano, a vital member of the 1905 Family of Restaurants, is a premium Tampa Sicilian dining destination located in the heart of Ybor City. Located in a restored 1925 macaroni factory, the restaurant honors the Sicilian immigrants who played a vital role in shaping Tampa's rich cultural history. Since its opening in 2020, Casa Santo Stefano has distinguished itself with its traditional Sicilian attributes. Some of these include Tampa-Sicilian recipes, an extensive Sicilian wine collection, and exceptional ambiance that combines history, art, and craftsmanship. The rooftop bar, Santo's Drinkeria, greatly complements the dining experience. This rooftop bar offers Sicilian street food, desserts, and signature cocktails.

Casa Santo Stefano's primary challenges include maintaining its unique position in a crowded marketplace, particularly against other 1905 Family properties like Columbia and Ulele, and expanding its customer base in both the B2C and B2B sectors. Opportunities exist to grow its catering and events business by leveraging its intimate venue and enhancing its courtyard space for larger gatherings. Additionally, refining its digital marketing strategy and improving social media engagement can help the restaurant strengthen its online presence and attract new audiences.

This strategic marketing plan is designed to address the key challenges faced by Casa Santo Stefano and capitalize on opportunities to enhance its position in Tampa's competitive dining and event marketplace. Central to the plan is leveraging the restaurant's unique differentiation, optimizing its marketing mix, and strengthening relationships with both consumers and businesses. The expected outcomes of these strategies include higher customer engagement, increased event bookings, stronger brand loyalty, and a more competitive position in Tampa's vibrant hospitality scene. Ultimately, this marketing plan will help Casa Santo

Stefano solidify its reputation as a cherished cultural and culinary institution while fostering sustainable growth in the years to come.

## **Company Overview and Current Marketing Strategy**

**Current Marketing Strategy.** Casa Santo Stefano is a Tampa-based restaurant emphasizing Sicilian cuisine influenced by Tampa's local heritage. Opened in 2020, it honors the contributions of Sicilian immigrants to Ybor City. The restaurant features artisanal interiors and dishes inspired by traditional Sunday meals, alongside a rooftop bar, Santo's Drinkeria. Its current marketing strategy emphasizes authenticity, cultural heritage, and a premium dining experience. It targets individual diners, event clients, and corporate customers through its high-quality offerings and engaging digital presence. Despite its success, there is room for growth in catering, events, and digital engagement to further establish its brand in Tampa's competitive restaurant scene.

**Current Positioning.** Casa Santo Stefano positions itself as a culturally rich, high-quality dining destination in Tampa. It highlights its unique heritage, Sicilian recipes, and upscale atmosphere, aiming to attract customers seeking authentic culinary and historical experiences.

**Product.** Casa Santo Stefano offers a product that goes beyond just food and drink; it provides an immersive cultural and historical experience centered around authentic Sicilian-inspired cuisine. The restaurant's offerings include high-quality meals, an extensive selection of Sicilian wines, and expertly crafted cocktails, all served in a historically significant venue.

The consumer benefits of Casa Santo Stefano's product can be categorized into three primary dimensions: emotional, functional, and social. Emotionally, the restaurant connects diners to a sense of heritage and history, allowing them to experience the flavors and traditions of

Tampa Sicilian cuisine in a meaningful and authentic way. Functionally, it delivers high-quality meals, dependable catering services, and versatile event-hosting capabilities, making it a practical choice for both individual diners and larger gatherings. Socially, the restaurant offers a prestigious ambiance that is ideal for creating memorable moments during social occasions, whether it be a casual night out or a formal event.

Casa Santo Stefano's branding further emphasizes its uniqueness and value. By weaving its rich historical narrative into its identity and offering premium culinary experiences, the restaurant resonates deeply with its target audience. The benefits ladder is a powerful marketing framework that allows businesses to articulate how their products or services meet customer needs at progressively deeper levels, starting with basic functional benefits and climbing toward emotional and transformational benefits. For Casa Santo Stefano, the benefits ladder demonstrates how its offerings transcend traditional dining to deliver a rich and meaningful customer experience.

At the base of the ladder are the features, which represent the tangible aspects of Casa Santo Stefano's offerings. These include authentic Sicilian-inspired dishes crafted with high-quality ingredients, an extensive Sicilian wine list, and unique cocktails. The restaurant is housed in a restored 1925 macaroni factory, a space that combines historic charm with artisanal craftsmanship. Additionally, Casa Santo Stefano offers event-hosting and catering services, providing versatility for different occasions. These features lay the foundation by addressing the practical expectations of quality, variety, and ambiance.

Building on these features are the functional benefits, which explain how Casa Santo Stefano meets practical customer needs. The restaurant serves as a reliable destination for enjoying high-quality meals and drinks in a unique setting. It also provides tailored catering and

event-hosting options, ensuring that customers have access to authentic Tampa Sicilian cuisine for both intimate gatherings and larger celebrations. Furthermore, its diverse menu caters to a range of occasions, from casual lunches to formal dinners, enhancing its appeal across different customer segments.

Climbing further, Casa Santo Stefano delivers significant emotional benefits by connecting customers to Tampa's rich cultural heritage. Through its storytelling and family-inspired recipes, the restaurant evokes nostalgia and warmth, creating an atmosphere that feels both personal and special. This emotional resonance is amplified by the venue's historical significance, which pays tribute to Tampa's Sicilian immigrants. Dining at Casa Santo Stefano becomes more than a meal—it's an opportunity to experience and celebrate a legacy of community, family, and tradition.

The next level of the ladder involves social benefits, where Casa Santo Stefano enhances the customer's social identity. Dining or hosting events at the restaurant offers a sense of prestige and sophistication, making it an ideal choice for celebrating milestones or entertaining guests. The upscale ambiance and unique offerings create opportunities for social validation, as customers feel proud to share their experiences with friends, family, and colleagues. Additionally, Casa Santo Stefano's strong connection to Tampa's cultural narrative fosters a sense of belonging and pride for local patrons.

At the top of the ladder are the transformational benefits, which represent the ultimate value Casa Santo Stefano provides. These benefits help customers feel a deeper connection to their cultural roots or explore and appreciate Tampa's rich history. By merging history, cuisine, and craftsmanship, the restaurant inspires customers to see dining as an opportunity for cultural exploration and celebration. Casa Santo Stefano becomes more than just a dining venue—it is a

place where people can create meaningful memories, celebrate heritage, and experience a profound sense of community.

By addressing needs at every level, from functional to transformational, the restaurant creates a holistic and compelling customer experience. This framework also provides a clear roadmap for marketing efforts, ensuring that messaging appeals to a wide range of motivations. For example, promotional materials can highlight the high quality of the cuisine, while storytelling campaigns can focus on the emotional and cultural connections patrons make during their visits. In doing so, Casa Santo Stefano strengthens its brand appeal, fosters customer loyalty, and solidifies its position as a treasured cultural and culinary destination in Tampa.

**Promotion.** Casa Santo Stefano uses a strong promotional strategy focused on digital channels and partnerships. The restaurant actively leverages social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, X, and TikTok to showcase its menu, promote events, and highlight community efforts. On social media, Casa Santo Stefano maintains a consistent presence with high-quality, visually appealing content. Posts feature dishes, the restaurant's restored interiors, and updates about special events and promotions. Local media partnerships further help to connect Casa Santo Stefano to Tampa's cultural and culinary community.

Despite its solid strategy, there's room for improvement. Partnering with influencers who align with the brand could help reach new audiences, particularly younger customers. Targeted social media campaigns, like geotargeted ads or special promotions, could also boost engagement and attract more visitors. By continuing to refine its promotions through creative collaborations and targeted campaigns, Casa Santo Stefano can enhance its visibility, attract more customers, and strengthen its position as a top dining and event destination in Tampa.

**Place.** Casa Santo Stefano's distribution strategy emphasizes accessibility and versatility, catering to a diverse range of customer needs. This venue provides a full-service dine-in experience, offering customers the chance to immerse themselves in the unique ambiance of Tampa Sicilian culture. In addition to its main dining area, Santo's Drinkeria, the rooftop bar, expands the restaurant's appeal by offering a casual yet refined option for dining and socializing. Serving Sicilian street food, desserts, and signature cocktails, the rooftop bar is an attractive destination for both regular diners and private events, creating a vibrant space that enhances Casa Santo Stefano's overall experience.

To further broaden its reach, Casa Santo Stefano provides curbside catering and takeout services. These options allow customers to enjoy its authentic cuisine in the comfort of their homes or at private gatherings, extending the restaurant's presence beyond its physical location. By offering these flexible distribution channels, Casa Santo Stefano ensures that its high-quality dining experience is accessible to a wide variety of customers.

**Price.** Casa Santo Stefano employs a premium pricing strategy that aligns with its reputation as a high-quality dining destination. The pricing reflects the exclusivity and craftsmanship of its offerings, as well as the distinctive experience it provides. From the artisanal Sicilian-inspired dishes to the unique ambiance of its historic venue, every element of Casa Santo Stefano reinforces its value as a luxury dining option. After visiting Casa Santo Stefano with my group members, we noticed a trend of authenticity and complexity within their menu items that reflect their pricing strategy.

The antipasti section features dishes like the Antipasti Salumi e Formaggi, a platter of imported meats, cheeses, Sicilian olives, and marinated vegetables, priced at \$20, and the

Meatballs della Nana, a hearty blend of pork and beef braised in house-made tomato sauce, available for \$10. These appetizers set the stage for the meal, blending quality and heritage.

The pasta dishes, under the "Maccheroni" section, are equally impressive. The Casarecce Bolognese, featuring imported casarecce pasta with a rich blend of beef, veal, and plum tomatoes, is priced at \$18, while the Spaghetti Nana Maria, a robust dish with meatball, pork shoulder, Italian sausage, and hard-boiled egg in tomato sauce, is available for \$20. These dishes highlight the restaurant's commitment to delivering hearty, authentic flavors.

Casa Santo Stefano also offers Sicilian-style, thin-crust pizzas baked in a brick oven. The classic Margherita, with fresh mozzarella, basil, and extra-virgin olive oil, is priced at \$15, while the Carnale, a meat-lover's option with sausage, soppressata, and house-made meatballs, is available for \$18. These pizzas provide a casual yet elevated option for diners.

To complete the experience, the dessert menu features traditional favorites such as the Cannoli di Ricotta, a house-made pastry filled with Sicilian ricotta, chocolate chips, and candied citrus, priced at \$8. Another standout is the Tiramisù, a layered creation of coffee-dipped ladyfingers and mascarpone cream, available for \$10. These desserts add a sweet and indulgent finish to the meal.

After dining at Casa Santo Stefano, we decided to look into some of the other local Italian restaurants in the Ybor area. In comparison, Bernini, another Italian restaurant in Ybor City, features appetizers like Bruschetta at \$8 and Beef Carpaccio at \$10. Their main courses include dishes such as Fettuccine Alfredo with Chicken at \$22.80 and Chicken Parmesan at \$22.80, with some seafood options like Linguine & Clams priced at \$22.80. Carmine's, also situated in Ybor City, offers a mix of Italian and local favorites. Their menu includes items like the Meatball Sandwich and Italian Sausage Sandwich, both priced at \$16.80, and pasta dishes



such as Spaghetti & Meatballs at \$16.80 and Baked Ziti at \$14.40. La Terrazza, a well-established Italian restaurant in Ybor City, is known for offering authentic Italian food at surprisingly reasonable prices, making it a popular choice among locals and visitors alike.

Casa Santo Stefano's pricing reflects its commitment to high-quality, authentic Sicilian cuisine, positioning it as a premium dining option in the area. In contrast, restaurants like Bernini and Carmine's offer Italian dishes at slightly lower price points, catering to a more casual dining experience. La Terrazza provides authentic Italian cuisine at reasonable prices, appealing to those seeking a quaint and friendly atmosphere.

This premium approach emphasizes the restaurant's commitment to delivering exceptional quality and service. It positions Casa Santo Stefano as an ideal choice for special occasions, catering to customers who value a sophisticated and culturally rich experience. By maintaining pricing that matches the exclusivity of its brand, Casa Santo Stefano continues to stand out in Tampa's competitive culinary market.

## **Current Marketing Situation and Trends**

### **Economic Environment**

***Inflation and Consumer Spending.*** Over the course of recent years, rising inflation has pressured consumers to be more selective of their choices when dining out. However, upscale restaurants, like Casa Santo Stefano, known for their authentic Italian offerings and experiential dining, may still attract consumers who are seeking special occasions or high-quality meals.

***Tourism Impact.*** Casa Santo Stefano is in Ybor City, which is the heart of Tampa. Hillsborough and Pinellas County are some of the most traveled destinations not just in Florida, but the entire nation due to the famous beaches, nightlife, and new experiences (*Tampa Named*

*One of Top 25 Most “food-Forward” Cities*). Casa Santo Stefano can benefit from an ongoing rebound in tourism. The prime location also allows increased foot traffic.

## 2. Target Demographic

### a. Age Range

#### i. Primary Audience: Adults aged 30-65

1. Young Professionals (30-45): This group. Includes urban professionals who value premium dining experiences as a form of entertainment, networking, or leisure. They are most likely to visit Casa Santo Stefano for date nights, work dinners, or social gatherings.

2. Established Adults (45-65): These customers often prefer quality, ambiance, and authenticity over price. They most likely view Casa Santo Stefano as a place for family celebrations, business meetings, or fine-dining experiences.

#### ii. Secondary Audience: Millennials (25-35)

1. Millennials are usually drawn to restaurants and spots that offer a social media experience. Casa Santo Stefano offers visually appealing dishes with a unique ambiance which makes it the perfect “Instagrammable” experience.

### b. Income Level

i. Middle to High-Income Households: Casa Santo Stefano’s customers most likely are households that have disposable income who can afford fine dining. This demographic is willing to pay extra for quality ingredients, artisanal preparation, and a fine-dining experience.

ii. Affluent Families: Wealthier families may choose Casa Santo Stefano for family dinners.

### c. Lifestyle and Psychographics

i. Cultural Enthusiasts: Individuals who appreciate Italian culture, history, and cuisine are a perfect fit for Casa Santo Stefano. They are likely wanting an authentic experience and may want to experience Italian culture.

ii. Food Connoisseurs: Foodies who are interested in authentic homemade Italian recipes, artisanal cooking techniques, and unique ingredients. These food connoisseurs value the storytelling that is behind the dishes and may seek out restaurants like Casa Santo Stefano for their history and originality.

iii. Experience Seekers: Many of the target consumers are not just looking for a meal but an experience when they dine at Casa Santo Stefano. This includes a romantic and celebratory ambiance, along with professional service, and thoughtfully designed interiors.

d. Geographic Proximity

i. Local Residents: Upscale neighborhoods that are located within 10-15 miles of the restaurant provide a consistent base of regular consumers. This demographic values the convenience of a nearby fine-dining option.

ii. Tourists: Casa Santo Stefano can attract travelers exploring Tampa or St. Petersburg who seek out premium dining establishments as part of their overall vacation experience. Tourists, especially those from Europe, Canada, or other major U.S. cities, are more likely to be drawn to an authentic Italian offering, which would be Casa Santo Stefano.

e. Dining Motivation

i. Special Occasions: Birthdays, anniversaries, and big events draw a target audience willing to spend more money for exceptional service, food, alcohol, and ambiance.

ii. Business Dinners: Professionals who are looking to impress clients or host meetings chose to do so in an elegant setting, which would represent another segment of the demographic.

iii. Casual Luxury: Customers who enjoy dining out as a regular indulgence would find Casa Santo Stefano appealing due to its high-quality food and service.

3. Competitive Landscape:

a. Heavy competition from other Italian, Sicilian, and Mediterranean-style restaurants

i. Ybor City, Tampa, St. Petersburg, and surrounding areas all offer these cuisines.

b. Trend toward fast-casual dining and delivery apps could pull away some convenience-driven customers

i. Sit-down restaurants have been on the decline since the Covid-19 pandemic.

ii. More consumers are choosing delivery options such as UberEats or DoorDash

1. Casa Santo Stefano is currently not participating with UberEats or DoorDash

**Trends Impacting Casa Santo Stefano**

**Experiential Dining.** Consumers value dining experiences that go beyond food. Casa Santo Stefano can capitalize on this by enhancing its storytelling around its backstory and culture. The restaurant can potentially host theme nights.

**Focus on Sustainability.** Currently, there is a growing demand for sustainability which also includes sustainable dining. Incorporating locally sourced, organic, or environmentally friendly ingredients into the dining menu could help persuade environmentally conscious consumers.

**Digital Marketing.** Currently, an engaging social media presence on major social media platforms is crucial. Casa Santo Stefano is currently on social media and posts high-quality visuals of their dishes. Customer stories, and chef profiles would be a good addition to help boost profile and post visibility.

**Health and Awareness Trends.** Some customers could show interest in healthier menu options, such as gluten-free or plant-based alternatives. Casa Santo Stefano could highlight or mark these dishes in the menu that cater to these preferences all while maintaining authenticity throughout the whole process.

**Technology Integration.** Offering QR codes for contactless payments could enhance convenience. In recent years, Apple Pay, and Tap-to-Pay has grown increasingly common. Offering a QR code which allows for contactless payments could bring in a younger demographic. Leveraging customer relationship management tools can help with personalized marketing, such as targeting frequent diners with exclusive promotions and deals.

**Cultural Appreciation.** Authentic Italian restaurants are thriving due to their ambiance, high-quality service and food. Marketing efforts should include their heritage, traditional recipes, and ties to their culture. This can help create a distinct brand image.

With the use of this information Casa Santo Stefano can refine their target audience to maximize engagement. Targeting young professionals that are aged 30-45 and who have a middle-to-high income can be beneficial in creating customer loyalty that will last for years and creating word-of-mouth opportunities. With the location of Casa Santo Stefano being in the heart of Ybor City, marketing ideas can be crafted in order to increase visibility for tourists and foot traction. The Italian industry can be overcrowded and highly competitive meaning that Casa Santo Stefano needs to find key ways to differentiate themselves in the market. Some ways this can be accomplished are integrating QR code payments that allow Apple Pay or adding Casa Santo Stefano onto Doordash. Younger people who are aged 30-45 care about brand image and storytelling. Casa Santo Stefano can incorporate digital marketing strategies that allow for chef stories to be posted on social media channels. Casa Santo Stefano can also incorporate theme nights to add to the evolving dining world.

## **Competitive Analysis**

### **Industry Overview**

***High Demand For Italian Food.*** Pizza, pasta, and other classic Italian dishes are worldwide dishes. Selling worldwide famous dishes helps create a large customer base which helps Italian restaurants.

***Perception.*** Italian food has become a symbol of cultural and social prestige that has been shaped by marketing and media. Also, Italian food traditions are central to its success and popularity. Currently there is a growing global demand for Italian food, specifically, authentic Italian cuisine, natural wine, and premium olive oil.

**US Market.** The Italian food industry in the US is rapidly growing with a revenue of \$93.2 billion in 2023. The industry is expected to grow to \$94.8 billion in 2024. These factors are based on favorable economic conditions and the possibility of increased disposable income.

## **Direct Competitors**

### A. BellaBrava (Modern Trattoria) – Tampa/St. Petersburg, Florida

#### a. Strengths:

##### i. Strong Brand Identity

1. BellaBrava positions itself as a “New World Trattoria”.

This positioning statement helps blend traditional Italian cuisine but with a modern twist.

##### ii. Customer Loyalty and Positive Reviews

1. Many patrons at BellaBrava praise the restaurant and staff for its consistent quality, friendly service, and relaxed atmosphere.

##### iii. Outdoor Location/Prime Location

1. BellaBrava is located in downtown St. Petersburg means it reaps benefits from high foot traffic, a luxurious dining scene, and close proximity to tourist attractions. BellaBrava benefits from its enhanced visibility. BellaBrava also offers outdoor dining options, which captures consumers that find the Florida climate appealing.

#### b. Weaknesses

##### i. Perceived Price Point

1. Some consumers have left reviews stating that BellaBrava has a slightly overpriced menu compared to other Italian restaurants in the area.

- ii. Limited Expansion of Digital Offerings

1. BellaBrava does not have an option to order on DoorDash, but does have the option for online catering and UberEats. BellaBrava also does not have an online loyalty reward program.

- iii. Inconsistent Service

1. While the majority of the reviews for BellaBrava are positive and highlight the friendly staff, there are some reviews that point out slow staff response times during peak season and peak dining times.

B. IL Ritorno - St. Petersburg, Florida

- a. Strengths:

- i. Culinary Experience

1. Il Ritorno has a highly knowledgeable staff which helps ensure diners receive the highest quality of food and highest quality of guest experience. The executive Chef is David Benstock who is a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America.

- ii. Private Dining Room



1. IL Ritorno has a private room that is perfect for small birthday parties, business meetings, graduation parties, and so much more. The Dining Room is designed to seat up to 14 guests total at a custom-built wooden table. This room also has a surround sound system to help set the mood for the group dinner.

- iii. Chef's Bar

1. IL Ritorno Chef's Bar is a culinary experience that is not offered at any other restaurant in the Tampa Bay area. The Chef's Bar is a front-row seat to the open kitchen. This seat offers 8-9 dining options that are not available on the dining menu.

- b. Weaknesses

- i. Online Presence

1. IL Ritorno is not as active on social media as other Italian restaurants in the area. IL Ritorno also does not have an online presence as much as competitors.

- ii. High Price Point

1. IL Ritorno is on the high and upscale range for price points in the Italian fine dining industry for Tampa Bay. With some menu items surpassing \$300+, some consumers might not find this appealing.

- iii. Limited Table Turnover

1. IL Ritorno puts an emphasis on a fine relaxing dining experience while encouraging consumers to stay for the entire night. Due to this emphasis of people staying longer, this leads to a slower table turnover compared to other restaurants. This means that less people are being served per day due to unavailable tables or long wait times.

### C. Bavaro and Italian Restaurant - Tampa, Florida

#### a. Strengths:

##### i. Casual Atmosphere

1. Bavaro has aimed for a mixture between a fine dining experience with a relaxed atmosphere. This is perfect for families but also for potential business meetings.

##### ii. Online Presence

1. Compared to competitors, Bavaro successfully uses their online presence for online ordering, delivery services, and social media to market themselves. Bavaro offers large party catering and has options to cater events, for pick-up and delivery as well. Bavaro also offers a mobile pizza experience.

##### iii. Crafted Dining Experiences

1. Bavaro offers an extensive curated wine list as well as Italian-inspired cocktails. This helps separate Bravaro from its competitors.

b. Weaknesses

i. Dependence on Pizza

1. Bavaro highlights its pizza as the main attraction. This could be a drawback as certain consumers might want other Italian food that is not pizza.

ii. Inconsistent Service Reports

1. Throughout online reviews some consumers highlight lapses in service quality with delays during peak dining hours and peak seasons. Certain reviews also talk about staff attentiveness being inconsistent.

iii. High Price Point For Some Items

1. Some consumers have found that certain menu items are more expensive compared to competitor Italian restaurants. Since pizza is a main menu item this means that this restaurant is competing with local and chain pizzerias as well.

3. Indirect Competitors

- a. Locale Market – Offers artisan dishes with some Italian-inspired options. The main focus of Locale Market is to provide fresh, locally sourced ingredients that help support the local community and producers.

- b. Tryst Gastro Lounge – Fusion-style upscale dining with some Italian elements. Tryst Gastro Lounge focuses on a trendy, upscale atmosphere with creative dishes and cocktails.
  - c. Noble Crust – Southern-inspired dishes with Italian flavors. Noble Crust’s target audience is casual diners. Noble Crust offers weekend brunch specials and focuses on marketing their locally sourced ingredients that make it a community favorite for special occasions and casual dining.
4. Key Differentiators – Casa Santo Stefano (“Learn about Us.”)
- a. Authenticity
    - i. Casa Santo Stefano has a commitment to traditional Sicilian recipes. The wine, cheese, extra-virgin olive oil, salt, and even more all are imported from the family businesses located in Sicily.
  - b. Ambiance
    - i. When you walk into Casa Santo Stefano it is upscale but welcoming with a reflection on Italian heritage. Throughout the restaurant there are hand-painted, colorful backsplashes, and tabletops and countertops are ordered from Caltagirone, Sicily.
  - c. Quality
    - i. Ingredients as mentioned above are imported from Sicily. There is a high attention to detail.
  - d. Specialty Offerings
    - i. Casa Santo Stefano offers a traditional menu with offerings that are not available at other competing restaurants.

5. Positioning
  - a. Pricing: Casa Santo Stefano has premium pricing due to its upscale dishes and dining standards, which is equal to the industry average.
  - b. Unique Selling Proposition: Focused on selling Sicilian authenticity with an emphasis on an immersive cultural dining experience.
6. Customer Experience – Casa Santo Stefano should benchmark itself based on the following factors
  - a. Service
    - i. Competitors like Il Ritorno excel in personalized experiences, and Casa Santo Stefano should use this as a benchmark. Casa Santo Stefano can offer experiences that let guests watch what is happening in the kitchen or more personalization for their fine dining experience.
  - b. Ambiance
    - i. Casa Santo Stefano should match or exceed the ambiance of competitor restaurants such as BellaBrava and Noble Crust by having a strong emphasis on traditional décor.
  - c. Convenience
    - i. Casa Santo Stefano should explore partnerships with delivery platforms for high-quality takeout. Competing restaurants are on these platforms as well.

## **Analysis**

In order to have the best idea of the strengths and weaknesses Casa Santo Stefano holds, and to find what opportunities are available versus what threats need to be addressed, we will conduct a thorough SWOT analysis of the restaurant.

**Strengths.** Casa Santo Stefano's standout strength is its authenticity. It is the first Sicilian-specific restaurant in Tampa and has a lot to show for it, making it not seem like just somewhere to grab food but an invitation to step into the heart of Sicily, right in the middle of Tampa's historic Ybor City. Casa Santo Stefano embodies the soul of family dinners with recipes preserved and passed down from Sicilian 'nonnas' that make it seem like you are having a Sunday dinner at your favorite Italian relative's house because of its intimate ambiance. Every detail is strategically designed and seems to tell a story, the traditional decor, black and white picture portraits, or even the make-believe barbershop upstairs. With historic ties to the people of Santo Stefano Quisquina who migrated to Ybor in the late 19th and early 20th century, it creates a memorable and immersive experience that gives you a look at what the culture of Ybor has come from.

Another strength that sets Casa Santo Stefano apart from other restaurants is its unique dining experience. The open kitchen offers a captivating view of traditional pizzas being crafted in a brick oven. The wine cellar, overlooking the dining room, houses nearly 200 Sicilian-made wines, making it the largest offering of any restaurant in the United States. Each sip and bite connects consumers to the rich culinary heritage of Sicily, an example from the menu being 'Spaghetti Al Nero Con Polpo,' a house-made black ink spaghetti with grilled octopus, a dish originated in Eastern Sicily by fishermen.

Beyond the dining room, Casa Santo Stefano has an indoor/outdoor rooftop bar named Santo's Drinkeria that provides a less traditional approach. Guests can unwind with craft

cocktails, Sicilian street foods, and local Tampa cigars while they overlook Ybor City as the sun sets. It's the perfect spot for a pre-dinner drink and to listen to the live music offered, and is a great setting for group events. Santo's Drinkeria offers to rent out the area for private events to anyone, whether it be for a birthday party or for a company celebration. Another additional service includes Casa Santo Stefano's in-website pickup service, where customers can order takeaway right from the restaurant's website without having to go through an app and any added-on fees.

Casa Santo Stefano is a part of the 1905 Family of Restaurants, a legacy that stretches back over a century, well known to Tampa natives with the legendary Columbia restaurant a block away. Managed by fifth-generation Cuban-Spanish migrants, the restaurant honors Italian descendants who migrated to Ybor, making it more than a meal but a journey through time, brought to you by owners who are well-known and respected in the Tampa culinary community.

**Weaknesses.** While Casa Santo Stefano prides itself in serving top-quality Sicilian food, many budget-conscious consumers may hesitate to come in and dine due to the relatively high prices. Many online reviewers have criticized the cost, especially relative to portion sizes and additional charges on certain items, which creates a perception of low value. With a high price point, consumers tend to expect top-tier service, yet many reviews on Google and TripAdvisor highlight delays in seating, food preparation, and drink service.

Another weakness comes in the lack of younger consumers in Casa Santo Stefano's customer base. Primary research, online reviews, and social media posts suggest the restaurant struggles to attract diners under the age of 30, a demographic that is accustomed to sharing their dining experiences on social media. While Santo's Drinkeria appeals more to this crowd,

creating more “Instagrammable” opportunities like photogenic areas out in the entrance patio may help amplify word-of-mouth marketing through a stronger digital presence.

The restaurant's Sicilian specialization limits the level of public appeal. While this dedication enhances the restaurant's authenticity, it may alienate diners who aren't specifically seeking Italian cuisine. The absence of vegan options highlights the lack of broad public appeal, as Casa Santo Stefano does not provide a menu with options for all types of consumers in a market where inclusive menus are regularly available.

On the other hand, the issue of an Italian overload in Tampa dilutes the uniqueness Casa Santo Stefano holds. With so many fancy Italian options available, standing out even with a great product becomes challenging. The abundance of competition can diminish the restaurant's perceived value.

**Opportunities.** Casa Santo Stefano finds itself in a great position to leverage numerous opportunities, especially as Tampa Bay grows as a prominent culinary destination. The city has been acknowledged as one of the 25 most food-forward cities in the United States, making it a magnet for food lovers. Being located in the heart of Ybor it has the chance to position itself as a must-see attraction in the area. This could be done by collaborating with nearby businesses, whether it be a Ybor tour walkthrough or local cigar shops. Packages could be created that immerse tourists in both Ybor’s neighborhood history and Casa Santo Stefano’s Sicilian dining experience. Hosting events such as Sicilian heritage festivals or wine tastings could help deepen community ties while drawing a wide audience, away from regular consumers trying to get something to eat.

Expanding the restaurant’s services is a promising opportunity that can be leveraged. Expanding catering services and the introduction of delivery options could cater to a growing



demand for convenience without compromising the food offered, giving an option for consumers to get Sicilian food delivered straight to their door. While avoiding third-party delivery platforms like UberEats and DoorDash maintains control of brand and pricing, it takes away from a large customer base that wants food delivered and looks for options through these apps. If catering services were expanded to deliver, they would present Casa Santo Stefano with plenty of revenue opportunities by providing food at event locations or office lunches, for example.

Casa Santo Stefano could also strengthen its social media presence. Tampa's vibrant food scene thrives on Instagram-worthy posts and influencer shoutouts. Highlighting Santo's Drinkeria and its rooftop charm through all socials, offering virtual tours through its website, or running seasonal campaigns could captivate younger audiences that are more social media and trend-inclined, amplifying the restaurant's online reach. Leaning into storytelling and matching online trends could turn social media browsers into loyal customers.

Expanding menu options is another opportunity worth exploring. Casa Santo Stefano could choose to appeal to the narrower Sicilian food pallet to increase their unique product offering, adding seasonal items tied to Sicilian traditions such as the Feast of the Seven Fishes during the Christmas season.

Finally, introducing a happy hour at Santos Drinkeria could be a game-changer. Offering a discount during the first opening hours of the Drinkeria offers budget-friendly cocktails and appetizers during after-work hours, in which people who work nearby could attend to destress and socialize with coworkers. This happy hour would increase crowd sizes during the early parts of the night and create a good opening atmosphere to be followed by live music, also creating an inviting entry point to the full dining experience downstairs.

**Threats.** As dining trends shift so do customer preferences. Health-conscious and fast-casual dining options that may be trending take away from Casa Santo Stefano's traditional, hearty food which may not appeal to today's lighter and quick meal seekers. With a growing demand for plant-based and gluten-free dishes, not adding these to the menu risks alienating a portion of customers with dietary restrictions.

Ybor and Tampa is packed with Italian and family-style restaurants all competing for the same customers. With so many options offering so many similar dishes at various price points, Casa Santo Stefano must use other avenues to stand out. The challenge is to maintain its unique Sicilian identity while facing growing competition.

Restaurants in the surrounding area that offer similar Italian meals at lower prices could make Casa Santo Stefano seem less attractive. With cheaper Italian dining alternatives like Forbici Modern Italian, the restaurant must ensure it shows its value to justify having higher prices. In today's unpredictable economy, many consumers have cut back on their spending, including eating out. If people become more cautious with their finances during an economic downturn, they may choose to eat at a more affordable dining option, threatening the business of Casa Santo Stefano.

### **Issue Analysis**

Based on the SWOT analysis of Casa Santo Stefano, several key issues and challenges have been identified that need to be addressed for the restaurant to grow and continue to succeed in a competitive market. These issues are placed in order of importance and are supported by insights from earlier analysis, offering a clear path for actionable objectives.

**Relative High Prices and Low Value Perception.** An urgent issue Casa Santo Stefano is facing is its high price point which has ultimately led to a perception of low value. Reviews

online frequently cite high prices, particularly in relation to portion sizes and costly add-ons. With a premium-priced menu, consumers have high expectations for exceptional service and a great experience, yet negative online feedback highlights wait times in all aspects of restaurant service, making consumers feel they are not getting their money's worth.

Customers are always looking for the best bang for their buck. In such a competitive restaurant market, the combination of high prices and service delays may drive them to bring their business elsewhere. This issue directly affects customer retention and brand reputation, especially with customers who are budget-conscious as they may choose not to try Casa Santo Stefano due to high costs and sub-par service.

***Lack of Appeal to Younger Consumers/Social Media Engagement.*** Casa Santo Stefano struggles to attract a younger demographic of consumers, particularly those under 30, who tend to be highly active on social media. While the restaurant has Santo's Drinkeria, a rooftop bar that appeals to this age group, a lack of Instagrammable moments or viral experiences could be preventing the restaurant from really tapping into this market. Younger consumers often create and repost dining trends, spreading word-of-mouth marketing through social platforms, crucial for building a strong presence online.

Primary research and online forums show that Casa Santo Stefano is not resonating with the younger, more social media-present population. To tap into this demographic more sharable and visually appealing experiences should be added, an example being a photo booth upstairs in Santo's Drinkeria or a wall mural out in the front patio. Leveraging influencer promotions could also increase the restaurant's social media presence and encourage people to post about Casa Santo Stefano.

**High Competition Among Upscale Italian Dining.** Tampa is packed with Italian and family-style dining options which makes it tough for Casa Santo Stefano to really differentiate itself. Despite the restaurant's unique Sicilian approach, the oversaturation of Italian restaurants makes for a similar type of restaurant, which lessens the restaurant's uniqueness and makes it difficult to stand out.

With so many different types of Italian restaurants in the area, price wars and consumer confusion can occur, only making a customer's choice more difficult. Without leveraging the restaurant's distinctive backstory or providing an advantage elsewhere, Casa Santo Stefano risks blending into a large crowd rather than standing out as a must-visit dining experience.

**Lack of Delivery/Event Catering.** Casa Santo Stefano has not yet capitalized on the growing consumer demand for convenience services in dining, such as delivery and event catering. While the in-website pickup and catering is a step in the right direction, the restaurant's absence from major delivery platforms like UberEats and DoorDash limits its reach and growth.

As consumers increasingly demand the option for food to be delivered to their doorstep, Casa Santo Stefano risks losing out on a major revenue stream by not offering this. While delivery services may take away ownership when it comes to pricing, it could provide a boost to sales and attract customers who may not want the atmospheric dining experience Casa Santo Stefano has to offer.

**Economic Sensitivity.** Recent economic downturns and consumer price sensitivity has created an environment where people are more cautious with how they spend money on food and eating out. As a fine dining experience, Casa Santo Stefano's high-end price structure may dissuade customers who are looking for more affordable alternatives.

Economic changes such as inflation lead to economic sensitivity. This forces consumers to cut back on their luxury spending, something many would consider counts as eating at Casa Santo Stefano. Exploring value-based promotions or a rewards program can make this more accessible for consumers without undermining the restaurant's upscale image and brand reputation.

### **Target Markets / Market Segmentation / Personas / Positioning Statement**

***Upscale Culinary Tourists.*** Casa Santo Stefano's strategic location in the historic and culturally rich Ybor City positions it perfectly to attract upscale culinary tourists—affluent travelers who seek out unique and authentic dining experiences as a central aspect of their itineraries. This target market consists primarily of middle-aged to older adults, typically aged between 35-65, who have a refined taste for gastronomy and a deep appreciation for the history and culture that influence a region's cuisine. These individuals often plan their visits around restaurant reviews, culinary guides, and recommendations from prestigious food and travel publications. Upscale culinary tourists are not merely diners; they are experiential seekers, looking to immerse themselves in the story behind their meals. They are likely to be well-traveled and well-educated, often with a keen interest in history, art, and cuisine. They appreciate the nuances of authentic recipes and the ambiance that reflects the heritage of the business. Casa Santo Stefano, with its roots deeply embedded in Tampa's Sicilian heritage and its preservation of the historic 1925 macaroni factory, offers a compelling narrative that enriches the dining experiences.

To effectively capture and engage this market, Casa Santo Stefano should consider partnerships with local and international travel agencies that specialize with culinary tours, as well as collaborations with luxury travel bloggers and influencers who can help amplify the

restaurant's unique offerings to a wider, appropriate audience. Creating immersive experiences, such as chef-led tours discussing the influence of Sicilian culture on Tampa's culinary scene or wine tasting events featuring fine Sicilian wines, can significantly enhance the appeal of the restaurant. Marketing efforts should focus on highlighting the restaurant's commitment to authenticity in both its cuisine and its ambiance. This can be communicated through crafted storytelling in promotional materials that delve into the history of the building and the origins of the dishes served. Further, the restaurant could develop exclusive packages that cater to these tourists, such as "Culinary Heritage Nights," which include multi-course dinners with paired wines and detailed descriptions of the historical significance behind each dish. These events could be scheduled during peak tourist seasons to maximize attendance. Also, implementing a reservation system that allows for bookings through high-end hotel concierges could also streamline the process for tourists planning their visits. Offering transportation options or partnerships with local luxury hotels could add an extra layer of service that enhances the overall experience for this clientele.

By focusing on upscale culinary tourists, Casa Santo Stefano not only taps into a lucrative market, but also aligns its operational strengths with consumer interests, creating a symbiotic relationship between the venue's offerings and the expectations of guests. This approach not only ensures a steady flow of high-value customers but also enhances the restaurant's reputation as a must-visit destination within Tampa's culinary landscape.

### **Persona 1**

Name: Julianne Fontaine

#### *Demographics*

- Age: 52

- Location: Chicago, IL
- Occupation: Gallery Owner
- Family: Married w/ 2 children

### *Psychographics*

- Interests: art, history, gourmet cooking, and world travel
- Values: authenticity, cultural heritage, and quality experiences
- Lifestyle: Enjoys traveling to new cities to explore their culinary scenes and cultural landmarks. Regularly attends art openings and cultural galas.

### *Behavioral Traits*

- Purchasing behavior: Prefers to spend on unique, high quality dining experiences rather than material goods. She believes the best way to explore a new place is through food. Values excellent customer service and attention to detail.
- Media consumption: Frequently reads high-end travel and lifestyle magazines like *Condé Nast Traveler* and follows popular travel blogs, Instagram accounts focused on food and travel and uses TikTok for recipe ideas.

*Positioning Statement: “For those who seek to explore culinary history intertwined with their dining experiences, Casa Santo Stefano is the destination restaurant that offers an authentic Sicilian-Tampa culinary experience so they can indulge in a meal that is as culturally enriching as it is delicious because of our historic location, preserving and celebrating Sicilian heritage.”*

**Trendsetting Urban Professionals.** The rooftop bar at Casa Santo Stefano, Santo’s Drinkeria, is uniquely positioned to attract trendsetting urban professionals—dynamic

individuals in their late 20's to mid 30's who thrive in vibrant social environments and are always on the lookout for the next popular spot to visit. This target market includes young professionals, creatives, and entrepreneurs who not only seek quality drinks and food but also value the atmosphere and social aspects of the venues they frequent. Trendsetting urban professionals are typically well-connected, active on social media, and often influence their peers through their lifestyle choices. They prefer locations that provide a combination of excellent service, innovative cocktails, and a stylish ambiance that aligns with their modern and sometimes eclectic tastes. Santo's Drinkeria, with its panoramic views of Tampa's skyline and its chic, contemporary design, offers an ideal backdrop for both relaxed after work gatherings and lively weekend nights out.

To captivate this market segment, Santo's Drinkeria should implement a multifaceted marketing strategy that leverages digital platforms to build and maintain buzz around the venue. Engaging local influencers and bloggers for curated events or exclusive tasting nights can help generate content that highlights the bar's unique attributes, such as its signature cocktails or special event nights (live DJ sets, themed parties, etc.). Furthermore, partnerships with local businesses and tech companies can introduce the Drinkeria to a broader network of professionals looking for suitable venues for corporate events or casual networking. Hosting such events can firmly establish Santo's Drinkeria as a go-to spot for young professionals in the Tampa area. The Drinkeria should also consider introducing loyalty programs or "Happy Hour" specials targeted at this demographic, which typically appreciates value alongside quality. Such an initiative could encourage repeat visits and turn casual visitors into regular patrons. Additionally, maintaining an active and engaging presence on social media platforms like Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok is crucial. These platforms should regularly feature attractive photos of the venue, updates on



upcoming events, and highlights of the nightly specials to keep the venue top of mind among this target group. User-generated content, such as posts from customers at the location, should be encouraged and regularly featured to enhance the community feel and reach.

By focusing on trendsetting urban professionals, Santo's Drinkeria can tap into a market that not only brings in steady business but also enhances the bar's status as a fashionable and desirable destination in Tampa's nightlife. This approach could also create more interest in the restaurant as well if the bar became more highlighted among the offerings of Casa Santo Stefano. This approach aligns perfectly with the establishment's upscale yet inviting ambiance, ensuring the venue remains a popular choice among those who are often the tastemakers in their social circles.

## **Persona 2**

Name: Alex Rivera

### *Demographics*

- Age: 29
- Location: Downtown Tampa, FL
- Occupation: Digital Marketing Strategist
- Family: Single

### *Psychographics*

- Interests: Social media trends, technology, fashion, music, and urban nightlife
- Values: Innovation, connectivity, social status, and aesthetic appeal
- Lifestyle: Active social life, frequents trendy spots, enjoys being seen at the right places, and heavily engages in social media to document and share experiences

### *Behavioral Traits*

- **Purchasing Behavior:** Prefers spending on experiences over material goods, values quality and uniqueness in service and products.
- **Media Consumption:** High user of Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok; follows popular influencers and brands, often reacts to and shares content related to nightlife, cocktails, and city events

*Positioning Statement: “For those who thrive in vibrant social environments and value contemporary style, Santo’s Drinkeria is the rooftop bar that provides a stylish ambiance and innovative cocktails so they can enjoy vibrant networking and socializing in premier Tampa locale because of our panoramic city views and contemporary design that captures the essence of modern urban nightlife.”*

**Corporate Connectors.** This target market for Casa Santo Stefano’s events business comprises a sophisticated and professionally diverse group of corporate event planners, human resource professionals, and business executives. This demographic focuses on sourcing distinctive, high-quality venues for an array of corporate functions such as strategic meetings, product launches, team-building retreats, and elegant company celebrations. Corporate Connectors are typically decision-makers or influencers in their organizations, ranging in age from 30-55, who value the importance of an impressive venue in creating successful and memorable corporate events. They are often looking for venues that not only provide logistical support and flexibility but also as an element of cultural richness and historical ambiance, which can enhance the overall event experience and reflect positively on their company’s brand.

To strategically engage this target market, Casa Santo Stefano should adopt an approach that emphasizes both customization and exceptional service. Firstly, the venue can offer bespoke

event solutions tailored to the diverse needs of corporate functions. This includes everything from providing a variety of modular space configurations to accommodate everything from intimate strategic meetings to large-scale company celebrations. Further enhancing the venue's appeal, Casa Santo Stefano should implement a robust corporate membership program. This program would offer valuable benefits such as discounts on bookings, priority access to event spaces, and exclusive member-only services like a custom catering menu. Such a program not only incentivizes repeat business but also establishes a sense of exclusivity and loyalty among corporate clients. To directly engage with potential clients, the venue could host dedicated networking events and venue showcases. These occasions would allow corporate event planners and executives to experience the ambiance, culinary offerings, and logistical capabilities of Casa Santo Stefano firsthand, fostering trust and showcasing the venue's suitability for high-profile events. Interactive elements like live cooking demonstrations could be included to highlight the venue's unique features and operational excellence. Additionally, strategic partnerships with local business councils, chambers of commerce, and industry associations can significantly boost Casa Santo Stefano's visibility within the corporate community. Such partnerships could facilitate introductions to a network of potential clients and align the venue with professional groups that regularly host events. Lastly, targeted B2B marketing efforts should leverage platforms like LinkedIn and collaborations with business publications to reach corporate event planners effectively. Marketing materials should highlight testimonials from previous clients, cases of successful events, and detailed descriptions of the venue's capabilities to enforce credibility and showcase competence

By adopting these detailed strategic considerations, Casa Santo Stefano can successfully attract and retain a discerning corporate clientele, ensuring that the venue remains a preferred choice for professional and memorable corporate events in the competitive Tampa market.

### **Persona 3**

Name: Natalie Chen

#### *Demographics*

- Age: 42
- Location: Clearwater, FL
- Occupation: Senior Corporate Event Planner
- Family: Married, 1 child

#### *Psychographics*

- Interests: Professional development, corporate networking, and event planning
- Values: efficiency, professionalism, prestige, and unique experiences
- Lifestyle: Balances a demanding career with family life, often spends weekends scouting new venues, attending industry events, and trying new restaurants

#### *Behavioral Traits*

- Purchasing Behavior: Seeks out venues that offer not just a space, but a comprehensive event experience that reflects well on her company. Prefers venues that provide customizable options and high-level service.

- Media consumption: Regularly reads industry publications, engages with professional content on LinkedIn, and follows thought leaders in the event planning and corporate space.

*Positioning Statement: “For those seeking an impressive and flexible venue for high stakes corporate events, casa Santo Stefano is the versatile event venue that offers tailored settings for memorable corporate events so they can impress stakeholders and enhance their company’s brand because our historic yet modern facility delivers both elegance and state of the art amenities.”*

## **Proposed Marketing Strategy**

Casa Santo Stefano’s marketing strategy focuses on building stronger connections with its customers, expanding its event and catering business, and standing out as a top dining destination in Tampa. By focusing on its unique history and Sicilian roots, improving its digital presence, and refining its offerings, the restaurant can attract new customers while keeping loyal ones coming back.

## **Product**

***Enhancing the Experience.*** Casa Santo Stefano is more than just a place to eat; it’s an experience. The plan includes hosting Sicilian-themed nights with live music, storytelling, or special wine dinners to create a deeper connection with customers.

To keep things fresh, the restaurant can rotate seasonal menus or limited-time dishes that show different aspects of Sicilian cuisine.

***Events and Catering.*** The restaurant already has great spaces for private events, but there’s room to grow. It could focus on wedding packages, corporate events, and even smaller

family celebrations, using the courtyard and rooftop for larger groups. Offering personalized catering menus for offsite events can also bring in new revenue.

## **Price**

***Cheaper Pricing Options.*** While Casa Santo Stefano is positioned as a premium restaurant, it can attract more guests by adding cheaper options, like weekday specials or a family-style dining night with shared plates at a slightly lower cost.

***Loyalty Programs.*** Launch a program where customers earn rewards for frequent visits. For example, after 5 visits, diners might get a discount or early access to special events.

## **Place**

***Online Presence.*** The website is already a key tool, but it could be improved by adding features like easy online event booking or selling branded products (like olive oil or sauces). The site should also better showcase private event spaces with photos and details.

***Expanding Reach.*** Partnering with local businesses, hotels, and tourism boards can help bring more attention to Casa Santo Stefano as a go-to spot for visitors and locals alike.

***To-Go Options.*** With more people enjoying meals at home, offering high-quality curbside catering or family meal bundles could appeal to busy families or professionals.

## **Promotion**

***Telling the Story.*** Casa Santo Stefano has a great story, its in a historic macaroni factory and celebrates Tampa's Sicilian roots. Sharing this history through social media posts, short videos, or blogs can attract people who love unique dining experiences.

***Social Media Campaigns.*** Focus on visual platforms like Instagram and TikTok to show off the beautiful space, the food, and events. Use hashtags like #TampaSicilianExperience to

encourage customers to share their own visits. Collaborating with local influencers can also help reach new audiences.

**Community Engagement.** Hosting local events, like cooking classes or wine tastings, is a great way to get people involved and talking about the restaurant. It could also partner with local charities or cultural organizations to host fundraisers or themed dinners.

### **How This Plan Helps**

This strategy helps Casa Santo Stefano stand out in Tampa's crowded restaurant scene. By focusing on what makes the restaurant special, its history, food, and atmosphere, while also modernizing its approach to marketing, it can grow its audience and become a favorite for dining and events. Results could include:

- 1. More event bookings, especially for weddings and corporate gatherings.*
- 2. More engagement on social media, bringing in younger diners.*
- 3. Steady revenue growth through new catering options and dining promotions.*

### **Action Plan #1: Adding Casa Santo Stefano to DoorDash and UberEats**

*Objective:* Expand Casa Santo Stefano's customer base by offering delivery through DoorDash and UberEats. This would increase customer convenience for existing consumers and would attract new customers who are seeking premium Italian dining but at home.

#### **Step 1: Research and Preparation**

To help prepare for delivery services, Casa Santo Stefano should evaluate the menu to help identify items that are suitable for takeout based on durability on transit route and in containers. All dishes reflect the brand so it is key to select dishes that would look presentable after being transported. Dishes must maintain their temperature, appearance, and taste. Popular dishes should be included which will help with brand authenticity and fine dining experience. A

simplified delivery menu could also be crafted as well. The next step is to research the requirements of platforms and determine if pricing adjustments need to be made to help cover the costs of fees. Casa Santo Stefano could also invest in high quality take-out containers that feature the brand logo, or possibly include napkins with the brand logo to help enhance the presentation and showcase the restaurant's story.

## **Step 2: Onboarding and Integration**

To help expand Casa Santo Stefano's presence on takeout platforms, the first step is to register the restaurant on DoorDash, UberEats, and similar services. This could include the restaurant profile featuring high-quality images of popular dishes and detailed descriptions of menu items with accurate pricing. The next step is to train kitchen staff on how to prepare delivery orders with the same level of quality as a person would receive in store. The same would go with the front of staff on training them on how to manage delivery orders efficiently. Finally, integrating DoorDash and UberEats systems with existing point of sale systems for seamless tracking of orders and sales is key.

## **Step 3: Marketing and Promotion**

Coming up with a *Launch Announcement* is key in helping market and promote the new delivery options. Promoting the new delivery option through social media channels, website, and email newsletter could be an essential way to help with marketing and promotion. Creating visually appealing posts highlighting key popular dishes that are now available for delivery could be another way to help market. *Leveraging Platform Promotions* is another way to successfully help with the introduction of delivery apps. Some ways could include, collaborating with DoorDash and UberEats for promotions. This can include free delivery on your first order or 10% off first time orders, or by using the in-app ad feature to target local customers that have



recently searched for Italian cuisine. Another way to *Engage Customers* is by including flyers or QR codes in restaurants or on dine-in bills encouraging guests to try delivery for their next meal. This could also include coupon codes to use on delivery platforms, or offering loyalty incentives for repeat delivery customers. This can include discounts on future orders or the delivery fee waived.

With the addition of DoorDash and UberEats being available to consumers within a certain set mile range of Casa Santo Stefano this will increase revenue and customer loyalty. Consumers that are not in the mood for a fine dining experience can now have the opportunity to bring their favorite premium Italian food to their own kitchen.

### **Action Plan #2: Launching a Fixed Dinner Menu**

To enhance customer engagement and differentiate itself in Tampa's competitive dining scene, Casa Santo Stefano will introduce a fixed Sicilian dinner menu. The objective of this plan is to attract diners seeking a unique, immersive culinary experience, while also increasing weekday foot traffic, boosting per-customer spending, and reinforcing the restaurant's cultural identity. This initiative specifically targets three key market segments: upscale culinary tourists, trendsetting urban professionals, and affluent families or groups celebrating special occasions.

The fixed dinner menu will feature a five-course Sicilian dining experience, highlighting the authenticity and richness of the region's culinary heritage. Dishes will include Sicilian arancini, caponata, Pasta alla Norma, swordfish involtini, and traditional cannoli. These will be paired with curated Sicilian wines to elevate the experience. A storytelling component, led by chefs or servers, will weave cultural narratives into each course, offering diners a deeper connection to Sicilian traditions. The pricing will reflect the premium nature of the offering, set between \$65 and \$85 per person, with an option for a \$250 family package for groups of four.

Additionally, a 10% discount will be available for weekday reservations, incentivizing visits during off-peak hours.

The fixed menu will be prominently featured both in the restaurant's main dining area and rooftop bar, Santo's Drinkeria, offering guests the flexibility to choose their preferred ambiance. The restaurant's website will showcase the menu with high-quality visuals and a seamless reservation system, supported by QR codes placed on-site for quick access. To further broaden its reach, Casa Santo Stefano will collaborate with local hotels and businesses to position the menu as a must-try experience for culinary tourists.

Promotion efforts will include a themed launch event titled "Sicilian Nights," featuring live music, storytelling, and a showcase of the fixed menu. Social media campaigns on Instagram and TikTok will highlight the menu with visually appealing posts and hashtags like #CasaSantoSicilianExperience, encouraging customers to share their dining experiences. Collaborations with Tampa-based food influencers will amplify the campaign, while loyalty program members will earn double points on fixed-menu purchases during the first two months, encouraging repeat visits.

The total budget for this initiative is projected at \$9,500. This includes \$1,500 for menu development, \$2,000 per month for three months on social media advertising, \$1,500 for influencer collaborations, \$3,000 for the launch event, and \$1,000 for staff training. Success will be measured through several SMART goals: a 15% increase in weekday reservations within three months, \$25,000 in additional revenue from the fixed menu in the first quarter, 90% positive customer feedback from surveys and reviews, and a 20% increase in Instagram engagement during the campaign.

By offering a curated fixed dinner menu, Casa Santo Stefano will not only attract new diners but also strengthen its position as Tampa's premier Sicilian dining destination. This initiative is designed to celebrate the restaurant's heritage, deliver an unforgettable dining experience, and drive sustainable revenue growth.

### **Action Plan #3: Happy Hour(Aperitivo Hour) at Santo's Drinkeria**

For Casa Santo Stefano to grow the amount of customers they have at Santo's Drinkeria while sticking to their traditional, Sicilian roots, we suggest the implementation of an Aperitivo Happy Hour. This is an Italian tradition of enjoying a drink and appetizer before a meal to stimulate one's appetite with the twist of a happy hour discount on cocktails and appetizers. The objectives of this 2 hour discount, only available at Santo's Drinkeria is to establish the spot as a must-visit rooftop bar, increasing early evening traffic by offering a happy hour experience tailored to young professionals and social media-savvy foodies. The final goal of the Aperitivo Hour is to incentivise people who wouldn't visit the Drinkeria to do so.

The Aperitivo Hour tackles several of the key issues mentioned in the SWOT analysis. It addresses the issue of the perception of high prices by offering budget-friendly, high-value discounts with bundled pricing, addresses competition from other Italian restaurants and rooftop venues with a unique happy hour, and addresses the restaurant's limited appeal to customers under 30 who enjoy social dining experiences and lack of social media engagement through influencer led social media campaigns. The target market of the Aperitivo Hour comprises of young to middle aged professionals looking to unwind after a long day's work. This target market would be college educated, have a disposable income, and is living or working near Ybor City. Younger and budget-conscious consumers looking for a good deal on good food and drinks would be another target market, seeing as these customers tend to use social media more actively

and may prioritize experiences that can help boost their online image. Local foodies and tourists exploring Ybor City who value affordable high quality dining experiences in a relaxed environment would also be a target, as they look to seek memorable, local experiences that blends history with food and drinks.

This proposed Aperitivo Hour will include discounts to select Sicilian inspired cocktails such as the Limonata, Sicilian Aperol Spritz, Paradiso, and the Tiramisu Espresso Martini. Each of these cheaper menu cocktails will be \$4 off from 5pm-7pm. Certain appetizers will also be \$4 off during these hours. The timeliness of this happy hour is to make sure the Aperitivo aligns with its tradition in Italy, being known as a light snack and drink before the main course. Exclusive bundled deals, such as the cocktails mentioned above with an appetizer for \$18 provides pricing that is designed to be accessible and shows a high value proposition without compromising quality.

The rooftop venue of Santo's Drinkeria offers a perfect setting for socializing, combining indoor/outdoor seating with live music and a welcoming ambiance that enhances the appeal for social groups and after work gatherings. Promotional events before the Aperitivo Hour launch will include an influencer night to generate social media buzz. In this, Tampa's top food bloggers and Instagram influencers will be invited to experience this new Aperitivo Hour at no cost, sampling these discounted cocktails and appetizers with the goal of them sharing posts for their followers under a custom hashtag like, #AperitivoHour or #SantosAperitivo. A broader social media campaign in addition to this will ensure added awareness. Highlighting these eye-catching deals on social media along with targeted email marketing to Casa Santo Stefano's existing customer base and placed promotional flyers throughout Ybor City and Tampa will further increase visibility.

The estimated budget for this Aperitivo Hour campaign will be \$12,000. Most of the budget will consist of the influencer night, where the most promotional value will be brought through their social media awareness and reviews posted from food bloggers. It will cost around \$5,000 to host a full night event of 30+ influencers with a full free Santo's Drinkeria Aperitivo Hour menu. Social media advertisements, email marketing and flyer costs should add up to around \$3,000. Live entertainment and decoration supplies for the influencer night and after should add up to a maximum of \$2,000. In addition to these costs, Casa Santo Stefano should spend another \$2,000 and get themselves an advertisement to introduce Aperitivo Hour on a Tampa Bay newsletter or at local community events. A collaboration with Appy Hour, a free app for discovering all of the happy hours in your area is key as it reaches a market that is solely interested in these early evening deals. Casa Santo Stefano can easily get listed on the app by creating a profile and provide details of what and when happy hour is offered. This is a small price to pay for the potential such a promotion for this Aperitivo Hour could add in terms of awareness with locals, food lovers, and social media users.

To measure this action plans success, attendance during Aperitivo Hour will be tracked, aiming for a 20% increase in early evening traffic within three months. Revenue benchmarks will target a 15% rise in overall sales within these 3 months, which may be difficult to estimate with lower prices. Being that this is going to be kicked off with an influencer event, we expect Casa Santo Stefano's social media engagement metrics such as follower growth, post shares, hashtag usage, and story views to earn a 20% boost. Customer feedback should also be collected as people leave the new Aperitivo Hour to refine offerings based on what issues/opportunities customers mention.

This action plan blends Casa Santo Stefano's authentic Sicilian roots with modern trends, ensuring a memorable and valuable happy hour experience unlike any in Tampa. The influencer night will set the tone for Santo's Drinkeria's growth and sustained success, elevating this rooftop bar as a standout destination in Tampa's highly competitive restaurant and bar market.

#### **Action Plan #4: Seasonal Cooking Classes**

Planning seasonal cooking classes at Casa Santo Stefano is a great way to engage customers and highlight the restaurant's culinary expertise. The classes would focus on teaching guests how to prepare dishes inspired by seasonal Sicilian ingredients and recipes, creating an educational and memorable dining experience. The first step in making this idea a reality is planning the details. Each class should focus on a specific seasonal theme, like "Spring Citrus Creations," "Summer Seafood Delights," "Autumn Harvest Pasta," or "Winter Comfort Foods." These themes should highlight the freshness and flavors of Sicilian cuisine. A schedule for the classes can be planned to align with seasonal ingredient availability, and costs for ingredients, take-home materials, and staff involvement should be carefully budgeted to ensure the classes are both affordable and profitable.

Once the planning phase is complete, organizing the logistics comes next. The restaurant's kitchen or a designated event area can be used to host the classes, depending on the number of participants. Setting up individual cooking stations or group setups will help ensure everyone has a hands-on experience. Ingredients should be prepped in advance, and recipe booklets or cards can be provided for participants to take home. It's also important to train staff to assist during the classes, ensuring they're knowledgeable about the recipes and able to help participants throughout the session. Proper organization and preparation will make the classes run smoothly and provide a positive experience for everyone involved.

Promoting the seasonal cooking classes is essential to attracting participants. Social media is a great tool for spreading the word. Posts showcasing the dishes participants will learn to make, along with videos of chefs demonstrating techniques, can help generate excitement. Flyers and posters placed in the restaurant and in local community spaces can also help inform guests about the upcoming classes. A sign-up page on the restaurant's website or a QR code linking to registration details can make it easy for people to secure their spot. Regular diners can also be informed through email newsletters, and offering early-bird discounts can encourage customers to book ahead.

During the classes, engaging participants is key to ensuring they have a great experience. Chefs should be personable and interactive, answering questions and sharing tips about Sicilian cooking. Guests should have plenty of opportunities to participate in the cooking process, from chopping and mixing to plating their dishes. Providing complimentary tastings of other menu items or small treats, like Sicilian pastries, can add to the overall experience. To make the classes more memorable, Casa Santo Stefano can give participants small branded items, like aprons or cooking utensils, as a keepsake from the event.

Finally, tracking the success of the cooking classes will help improve them over time. Metrics like the number of participants, repeat attendance, and customer feedback will show how well the classes are received. Monitoring social media engagement and reviews can also help gauge interest and satisfaction. Adjustments can then be made to improve future classes, such as tweaking the recipes, changing the format, or refining the promotional strategy.

Seasonal cooking classes at Casa Santo Stefano offer a unique way to connect with customers and showcase the restaurant's dedication to Sicilian cuisine. By focusing on seasonal

ingredients and providing an interactive, hands-on experience, the restaurant can build stronger relationships with its guests and enhance its reputation as a culinary destination.

#### **Action Plan #5: Sicilian Sunday Club**

The “Sicilian Sunday Club” is a loyalty initiative designed to deepen customer engagement by blending Casa Santo Stefano’s rich Sicilian heritage with modern customer relationship management strategies. Drawing inspiration from traditional Sicilian Sunday meals, the club offers customers the opportunity to immerse themselves in an exclusive community, creating lasting connections with the restaurant and its history. This initiative will not only enhance the dining experience but also build a loyal customer base through personalized perks, unique offerings, and cultural enrichment.

Membership in the Sicilian Sunday Club is free and begins with a warm welcome. Guests can sign-up either in store or online, receiving an introductory email detailing the significance of Sicilian Sunday traditions alongside their digital membership card. To make members feel immediately valued, the welcome package includes a complimentary dessert and glass of Sicilian wine during their first visit as members of the club. Over time, the program can evolve into tiered memberships that reward its visitors with benefits like personalized menu recommendations, exclusive event invitations, and reserved seating options. This approach can help to increase word of mouth for the restaurant thus incentivizing repeat business and will position Casa Santo Stefano as a cherished culinary destination for both locals and tourists alike. Central to the club is the concept of monthly perks, which emphasizes Casa Santo Stefano’s dedication to authenticity and culinary excellence. These rotating exclusives not only surprise and delight customers but also reinforce the restaurant’s reputation for innovation and cultural authenticity. In addition to this, Casa Santo Stefano can utilize the integration of exclusive



members only events that will also help to stimulate interest in the club and could increase membership enrollment, customer retention, and word of mouth.

***Chef's Spotlight Sundays.*** Chef's Spotlight Sundays are the pinnacle of culinary innovation, where Sicilian Sunday Club members are treated to an exclusive, ever-changing menu crafted by Casa Santo Stefano's executive chef. These dishes, inspired by seasonal Sicilian ingredients, regional traditions, or creative experimentation, are available only to members and rotate weekly, ensuring a fresh and exciting dining experience every Sunday. The chef takes center stage in this event by offering an intimate table side tableside explanation of the dish's origin, preparation techniques, and cultural significance. This not only elevates the dining experience but also strengthens the emotional connection between members and the brand by showcasing Casa Santo Stefano's culinary expertise. For example, a featured dish might explore lesser-known Sicilian recipes that aren't on the menu like pasta a la sarde, or creative twists on their menu offerings like pasta alla Norma with a modern twist by incorporating a mix of Sicilian and Floridian ingredients. This offers members something truly unique, exclusive, and memorable. This concept transforms Sunday evenings into a culinary journey, creating a strong point of differentiation in the competitive restaurant market in Tampa.

***Sicilian Wine-Tasting Sessions.*** Sicilian Wine-Tasting Sessions are designed to immerse club members in the rich heritage of Sicilian winemaking, providing an upscale, education, and sensory-driven experience. Held monthly, these intimate events will highlight rare and premium Sicilian wines, paired with small bites that enhance their flavors. A professional sommelier leads the session, guiding members through the tasting process with a focus on the history and unique characteristics of each wine. For instance, members could explore a bold red wine from Mount Etna's volcanic slopes or delicate whites from Sicily's coastal vineyards, deepening their

appreciation for Sicilian culture.. This event goes beyond a simple tasting by offering members practical knowledge such as pairing techniques they can replicate at home. Each attendee receives a curated tasting guide and exclusive discount on featured wines, encouraging purchases and driving additional revenue. By blending education with indulgence, these sessions elevate Casa Santo Stefano's reputation as an expert in Sicilian cuisine and wine, creating a powerful draw for both foodies and wine enthusiasts.

***Heritage Evenings.*** Heritage evenings provide a deeply cultural and interactive experience, celebrating the traditions and artistry that define Sicilian cuisine and lifestyle. Each event revolves around a specific theme, such as the history of olive oil production in Sicily or the time-honored craft of pasta making. For example, an olive oil tasting evening might feature a curated selection of Sicilian oils, with an expert explaining the nuances of flavor, production techniques, and their significance in Sicilian cooking members would learn to identify high quality olive oil and explore pairings with fresh breads or cheeses. Similarly, a pasta making night could involve a live demonstration where the chef teaches members how to craft classic Sicilian pasta shapes like orecchiette or cavatelli. Guests then enjoy their creations with serves with traditional sauces as part of a family style meal. These events foster a sense of community among members while emphasizing Casa Santo Stefano's authenticity and dedication to preserving Sicilian heritage. By focusing on storytelling and active participation, Heritage evenings position the restaurant as a cultural hub, enhancing the brand's narrative and appeal.

Implementing these events for members of the Sicilian Sunday Club offers Casa Santo Stefano a strategic way to elevate its brand and foster deeper customer connections. These events can be seamlessly integrated through careful planning, staff training, and collaborations with experts to ensure authenticity and high-quality execution. By appealing to food enthusiasts and

culture seekers with exclusive, immersive experiences, the restaurant strengthens customer loyalty, differentiates itself in a competitive market, and enhances the overall reputation of the restaurant. Strategically, these initiatives will also generate valuable digital content for marketing campaigns, drive membership in the club, and increase revenue sales through upselling opportunities such as retail product sales or pre-booked future visits. This approach transforms Casa Santo Stefano into more than a dining venue—it becomes a cultural and culinary hub that attracts new guests and builds lasting relationships with existing patrons, ensuring sustainable growth and a unique competitive edge.

## **Group Action Plan**

### ***Customer Loyalty Program with Points and Rewards***

The objective for launching a customer loyalty program at Casa Santo Stefano will enhance customer retention, increase repeat visits, and build brand loyalty by implementing a points-based loyalty program. By offering rewards and points, guests are encouraged to return and rack up points in order to exchange them for free meals or discounts. Customers would also find themselves possibly sticking to one fine Italian dining restaurant since they will get discounts after a certain number of visits. A customer loyalty program is also beneficial for Casa Santo Stefano because it allows for enhanced data analytics. This data can show consumer's favorite dishes and allows for the introduction of personalized marketing. An idea for a program name could be Amici Rewards which is Italian for "Friends Rewards". This name would showcase that everyone is friends and family at Casa Santo Stefano. Some feature of the program could include:

#### *1) Membership Enrollment*

- a) Free to join

- b) Customers can sign up via:
- c) In-restaurant tablet or QR code on bill
- d) Casa Santo Stefano website
- e) Form will collect basic information that includes Name, Email, Birthdate (could be optional but could be used for birthday rewards).

## 2) *Points System*

- a) Earn 1 point for every \$1 spent
- b) Bonus Points Opportunities
- c) Double Points Days: Could have these scheduled for low-traffic periods
- d) Signup Bonus: 50 points for registering
- e) Referral Bonus: 25 points for each new customer referred
- f) Seasonal Promotions: Earn 10 bonus points for each holiday visit

## 3) *Rewards Tiers*

- a) 100 points: Free dessert or drink
- b) 250 points: \$10 off your next in-store purchase
- c) 500 points: Free entrée up to \$20
- d) 1000 points: Exclusive Casa Santo Stefano gift (this could include a wine glass or branded item)
- e) Points could expire every two years as this would encourage visitors to visit and earn more.

## 4) *Exclusive Perks*

- a) Members-only could be offered discounts, early reservation time slots for special events, and first access to seasonal and new menu items.

- b) Each member can receive a birthday dessert or appetizer on their birthdate.

After fine tuning each rewards tier and the sign-up process the implementation timeline could look like this:

*1) Phase 1: Planning*

- a) Finalize rewards structure and program name
- b) Find and collaborate with a loyalty platform provider (Smile.io or Square Loyalty are good options).
- c) Develop marketing materials and content to use on social media and in the restaurant

*2) Phase 2: Setup*

- a) Train staff on how to enroll in the program and how to effectively communicate the benefits of the program to the customer
- b) Test the system to ensure it functions and tracks all points of contact as well as the point system working effectively.

*3) Phase 3: Launch*

- a) Announce the program on social media, email newsletters, and in the restaurant using signs and word-of-mouth.
- b) Offer a launch promotion: Possibly offer a promotion where you can earn double points during the first month of launch

*4) Phase 4: Ongoing Engagement*

- a) Analyze customer data to identify top spenders and visitors and reward them with extra discounts and more points.

- b) Send personalized offers based on recent spending habits. If a person orders pasta a lot, offer a free pasta dish after a certain number of purchases. This would be beneficial with the introduction of DoorDash or UberEats.

Using social media channels and in-store marketing is crucial in getting sign-ups into the program. This could be done two ways for restaurant promotions. A QR code could be placed on menus or receipts encouraging guests to sign up for the program. Staff could also mention the program when handing the guest their bill. On social media, engaging content should be created and posted onto Facebook and Instagram showcasing the rewards and member perks of the loyalty program.

Introducing a customer loyalty program will reward repeat customers with discounts and money off their future orders. It will also allow for guests to feel as if they are valued. Introducing a customer loyalty program will also help Casa Santo Stefano with customer retention and use data to analyze what are the most popular dishes and what customers like.

## Appendix

Article/Link	Research/Keypoints
<a href="https://casasantostefano.com/about-us/">https://casasantostefano.com/about-us/</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Pays tribute to Sicilian immigrants who helped build Tampa and Ybor City</li><li>● Also pays tribute to Cubans and Spanish</li><li>● Main goal is to offer a look back to Sunday suppers, with shared stories by friends, family, and community members</li><li>● Interior design offers a showplace of art and craftsmanship</li><li>● Dress Code:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ No baseball caps, preferred for men to wear sleeves</li></ul></li><li>●</li></ul>
<a href="https://www.wtsp.com/article/life/food/tampa-best-restaurants-food-forward-city-ranking/67-93ac04e6-bf5d-4bf1-8d09-ec1f5c1bab78">https://www.wtsp.com/article/life/food/tampa-best-restaurants-food-forward-city-ranking/67-93ac04e6-bf5d-4bf1-8d09-ec1f5c1bab78</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Tampa ranks among top 25 most “food-forward” cities.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Not about having trendy restaurants</li><li>○ Growing and diverse food scene</li></ul></li><li>● Ranked 24 out of 158</li></ul>

## SWOT ANALYSIS

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Authentic Sicilian dining experience, unique in Tampa</li> <li>● Immersive ambiance reflecting Sicilian culture</li> <li>● Large selection of Sicilian wines, unique menu offerings</li> <li>● Rooftop bar (Santo's Drinkeria) with private event options and live music</li> <li>● Takeaway service via website avoids third-party fees</li> <li>● Part of the well-known 1905 Family of Restaurants, adding credibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● High prices may deter budget-conscious diners</li> <li>● Perception of low value due to portion sizes and additional charges</li> <li>● Delays in seating, food preparation, and drink service noted by reviewers</li> <li>● Struggles to attract younger demographics under 30</li> <li>● Limited public appeal due to Sicilian specialization</li> <li>● Lack of vegan options and inclusive menu items</li> <li>● High competition among Italian restaurants in Tampa</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Leverage Tampa's growing status as a culinary destination</li> <li>● Collaborate with local businesses for packages or events (e.g., Ybor tours, Sicilian festivals)</li> <li>● Expand catering and introduce delivery services</li> <li>● Enhance social media presence to attract younger audiences</li> <li>● Seasonal menu offerings tied to Sicilian traditions (e.g., Feast of the Seven Fishes)</li> <li>● Introduce happy hour at Santo's Drinkeria to increase early evening foot traffic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Changing dining trends favoring health-conscious, fast-casual, and plant-based options</li> <li>● High competition among Italian and family-style restaurants in the area</li> <li>● Competitors offering similar meals at lower price points</li> <li>● Economic downturns leading to reduced consumer spending on dining</li> </ul>



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