



Photo courtesy of Jimmy Nicolau

## JIMMY NICOLAU

From early childhood memories of Yiayia's kitchen to modern day cookoffs with his father (an executive chef), it's obvious that food plays a central role in Jimmy Nicolau's life. In fact, he's made it his career. For more than 15 years, Nicolau has been working for Grecian Delight, a manufacturer and marketer of ethnic foods. He currently serves as corporate trainer, teaching new employees about the company's products and how to present them to customers.

In addition, Nicolau takes his Greek heritage and family life seriously. He was part of the first Greek Orthodox mission team that went to Kenya in 1987 to build a Greek Orthodox Church, and he is also a member of AHEPA. He's been married to his wife, Paula, for 16 years and they have three children (pictured), Aliki (12), Michalis (9) and Christos (6), and a dog named Ouzo.

# 15 minutes

with  
Publisher  
Alexa  
Ganakos

**If your life's philosophy could be summarized on a bumper sticker, what would it say?**

Faith – Family – Friends – Fun

**Where is the best "Greektown" in North America?**

I have to say Chicago!

**Why do you enjoy working in food service, particularly at Grecian Delight?**

This is truly a dream job for me because I am able to take my love of food and couple it with my love of Greek culture and get others excited about it.

**What trends are you seeing in the food service industry?**

Big companies getting bigger and losing sight of their customers' needs.

**What three things do you always have in your refrigerator?**

Feta, garlic and lemons.

**How do Americans view Greek food?**

The American palate has changed for the better. Greek food is at the top of the list. We use olive oil; we love garlic; we make cheese from goat's milk (feta); we have fresh bread; we eat fish and great cuts of meat; and look what we can do to green beans!

**What is your fondest childhood memory of your yiayia?**

Her kitchen always smelled incredible. When I cook, it brings me back to when I was little, and I know that yiayia will always be with me.

**What do you like best about Greek culture?**

We as Greeks are so passionate about life and live our lives that way.

**What advice would you give someone interested in the food service industry?**

Make it your passion whether you're cleaning the plates or plating the food.

**What book do you have on your coffee table?**

*Kitchen Confidential* by Anthony Bourdain

**What are some other interests?**

I love watches, cooking, cars, sports and spending time with my family. ☺

## The Chris Sarlas Orchestra

### Exceptional Greek & American music.

Two distinctive worlds...  
one fantastic ensemble.

847 673 1347

sarlasmusic inc.

www.sarlasmusic.com

Heard at the finest weddings, galas, and benefits including:

- 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008 St. Andrew Anniversary Gala
- 2008 Ascension of Our Lord 10th Anniversary Dinner Dance
- 2008 Socrates 100th Anniversary Celebration
- 2007 St. Nectarios Clergy Lality Dinner Dance
- 2006, 2007 Hellenic Dental Society Dinner Dance
- 2006 Metropolis of Chicago Philoptochos 75th Anniversary Celebration
- 2005 Hellenic Museum and Cultural Center Gala
- 2005, 2006, 2007 Hellenic Bar Association Scholarship Benefit