



SON WORSHIP

"I'm a true son of Hoboken and I'm damn proud of what Hoboken is," says Buddy Valastro, star of *Cake Boss*.

cause a frenzy, but beyond the pastries is the main attraction, the man himself, Buddy Valastro, and his loving, chaotic family who have all turned TLC's *Cake Boss* into one of the network's most watched and beloved hit shows.

"Not to pick on any other New Jersey television shows, but I feel like *Cake Boss* is probably the most flattering to New Jersey," Valastro tells me without a hint of braggadocio. And perhaps that could be attributed to the fact that Valastro and his family are true blue New Jersey born and raised. Valastro and his family—who've owned Carlo's Bakery since 1964—are thrilled with the resurgence in all things New Jersey.

"New Jersey is a very special place to me," he says. "I'm a true son of Hoboken and I'm damn proud of what Hoboken is. I want people to know that New Jersey is a great place. I love being close to Manhattan and I love the area that we live in. I also love that you can still go to a deli like Fiore's and get fresh mozzarella—that's what I really enjoy about where I live."

In addition to getting a glimpse into Valastro's home life, what keeps people tuning in every week are the over-the-top confections that the talented team at the bakery creates. From life-size replicas of a loved one

THERE'S A NEW 'BOSS' IN TOWN

BY AMANDA THOROGOOD

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHARLES ANTHONY

Venture to Hoboken during the day—any day—and you'll encounter a line of hungry people dozens, if not hundreds, deep on Washington Street all clamoring for a sweet treat from New Jersey's resident "boss." This time we're not referring to Bruce, but a boss of an entirely different kind.

The scene of this daily sugary obsession for so many is Carlo's Bakery. Yes, the cannolis are way above the rest and the lobster tails



JERSEY? SURE!

“*Cake Boss* is probably the most flattering show to Jersey.” This \$30 million cake (right), was created for socialite Devorah Rose.

(FROM LEFT) Lisa Valastro (sister), Grace Faugno (sister), Joseph Faugno (brother-in-law), Lisa Valastro (wife), Buddy Valastro, Mauro Castano (brother-in-law), Maddalena Castano (sister), Mary Sciarra (sister)

to jewel-adorned thousand-dollar cakes, Carlo’s Bakery does it all, and the creations that come out of the famed kitchen—including a Jersey City facility that



you have to see to believe—seemingly become more extravagant with each passing season. While that’s not to say that you can’t still enjoy a regularly priced cupcake or mouth watering raspberry tart, Valastro points out “we definitely have customers who spend \$50,000 to \$100,000 on a single cake.”

When viewers watched socialite Devorah Rose waltz into the bakery, it was apparent her request would be monumental. Delivering on the promise to ensure that a cake would be created fit for her lavish party,

diamond necklaces, bracelets and earrings that adorned the perfectly iced cake were topped with a sparkling tiara (naturally). Upon its completion, the cake reportedly became the most expensive in the world, worth a staggering \$30 million.

“The only thing that stops me is gravity,” Valastro says. “And maybe the parameters of a door.”

When not meeting the extravagant requests of his beloved clients, Valastro finds the time to spend with his family. Though he admittedly has very little free time to spare, Valastro

Valastro and his team constructed a seven-tier cake accented with more bling than an Elizabeth Taylor retrospective. The ruby, sapphire, emerald and

says that when he does get away he doesn’t hold back. “I want to eat at the best restaurants and always travel in first class. But I’ve always done that, because if you get one or two weeks off, it’s like ‘you know what, screw it, I’m gonna do it,’” he says. “We vacationed in Puerto Rico last summer and this year we’re going to Aruba.”

Back home, Valastro says he has a few favorite items that he surrounds himself with, including great wine. “I have a beautiful wine cellar with about 1,500 to 2,000 bottles of reds and whites from all over the world.” In addition, Valastro is also a self proclaimed “car and watch guy” with his favorite timepieces being Hublot and Rolex. “That’s kind of been a little bit of a gift back to me. I like cars, I like watches and I like eating a great meal.”

Looks like New Jersey’s new boss, Buddy Valastro, is having his cake and eating it, too. Sweet. ■