

# HEALTHY CHEF CHALLENGE 2026



## JOSE MARQUEZ

## PIACERE MIO

Jose Manuel Marquez has spent the past 30 years working in the restaurant industry. At the age of 16, he immigrated from Mexico to the United States and began working at Orso's as a dishwasher. After only a year, he left to find work closer to home, spending the next two years as a waiter in various Hispanic restaurants.

Later, he decided to return to Italian cuisine and began working as a line cook at Becco d'Oro under Head Chef Gaetano. About a year later, Gaetano left to open his own restaurant and invited Jose to continue working with him. Over the next 20 years, Jose worked his way through every position in the kitchen, gaining experience in all aspects of Italian cooking.

Once the pandemic hit however, Jose decided to move on and began searching for new opportunities. In the following years, he helped open two successful restaurants, La Parra and Regalia, serving as head chef for both. Having built the two kitchens from the ground up, he felt confident in taking the next step. With the support of his close friends Israel, Toni, and Paco, he went on to open two restaurants of his own—one in Forest Park and the other in Uptown.