Marcelo Marini is Argentinian by birth and Italian by blood. He grew up with his grandmother and lived in Argentina for 29 years before coming to the United States. Trained in journalism, Mr. Marini first found work in television operating the first Spanish language talk show in Houston on Sunday mornings called “Hola Amigos”. He also found work in a local restaurant called Jamie’s, a job where he eventually assumed the position as Chef. Soon thereafter, he opened his own empanada restaurant, called Marini’s Pastry Shop, in the medical center. Shortly thereafter, he opened a second pastry shop in Montrose area. 

1978, he was offered to work for Univision in San Antonio, Texas as a news director. He accepted the job and moved his family to San Antonio for that purpose but he always continued to come back to Houston in the weekends for his empanada businesses. In 1982, Mr. Marini eventually and permanently returned to Houston to continue his work in the media industry as well as the restaurant industry. The Marini’s are well known for their empanada often creating a rich combination of flavors and smells. Marini’s Empanada House sells more than 60 different type of empanadas. All his empanadas are hand made one at a time. And although it takes just 40 seconds to make one; having to make thousands daily can be challenging. Mr. Marini has two empanada shops
The Original Marini’s Empanada House has been there for about 9 years now. The key to success for the Marini’s has been how they treat their customers. They work extremely hard at making all their customers feel welcomed and providing them a sense of being at home. Adding to the warm feeling is the wonderful display of decorations that adorn the walls of the restaurant. Marini’s has an endless stream of pictures and photographs, and other funky memorabilia, including several paintings created by Mr. Marini himself. Known as the empanada place in Houston, Marini’s Original Empanada House is definitely a “must see” and a “must visit”.

Author: Amber Contreras and Jesse Esparza

Source: Marini’s Original Empanada House Personal Interview, November 20, 2015, Houston, Texas