



**Media Release**

**26 March 2013**

**Italian Chamber of Commerce looking to establish presence on Coast**

The Italian Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Queensland is establishing a branch of the Chamber on the Sunshine Coast which will be launched at a business networking lunch in Maroochydore on 8<sup>th</sup> April with Phillip Di Bella of Di Bella Coffee as the special guest speaker.

Former State and Federal parliamentarian Santo Santoro and current President of ICCI (Qld) said Italians have made a strong contribution to the Australian way of life, particularly since the post World War migration boom which saw thousands migrate away from poverty, unemployment and social upheaval to the Promised Land Down Under.

“While many migrants made the capital cities their home, others chose more tranquil regional areas of Australia such as the Sunshine Coast to stamp their multi-cultural footprint. The Chamber is committed to establishing a strong business and cultural presence on the Sunshine Coast,” Mr Santoro said.

Santo is being assisted by former Maroochydore Mayor, Joe Natoli and Sunshine Coast businessman, Peppi Bueti.

“I’ve known Joe Natoli for many years and I regard highly his professional and personal attributes. Sometime ago, Joe made me aware that there is a small but passionate group of locals from Italian decent here on the Sunshine Coast and there is a wonderful opportunity for them and others to benefit from the many services and networks provided by the Italian Chamber of Commerce.

“The Brisbane branch has many members including a number of high profile Italo-Australian business people who have carved out a successful life in a number of industries including construction, finance, small business, tourism, Government services, politics, arts and education.

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It's a great mix of people, we have a lot of fun and organise very effective networking functions and events.

"The Chamber also assists local businesses that want to export products and services into Italy. The Chamber receives requests from many Italian businesses who are seeking trade opportunities in Australia. It's our role to facilitate these requests and we've had some great success stories over the years," Mr Santoro said.

Mr Natoli said it was wonderful to have someone like Santo Santoro represent the Italian Chamber of Commerce at a state level.

"Santo has boundless energy and he is really well connected throughout Government and business circles, he currently runs a number of successful businesses and he's also done a wonderful job re-invigorating the Chamber with his passion and strong leadership.

"We are keen to form a branch of the Chamber here on the Coast and we have received support from a number of very interested people. The April lunch is being held at Arnica Restaurant which is owned by a fellow Italo-Australian Michael Torchia. We are pleased to have Santo and coffee guru Phillip Di Bella as our special guests."

"Phillip Di Bella is one of Australia's leading entrepreneurs and is also Vice-President of Italian Chamber. He's a busy man but we are delighted to have him come along to speak to us about his experiences and business success," Mr Natoli said.

**Event: Italian Chamber of Commerce lunch with Phillip Di Bella and Santo Santoro**

**Date: Monday April 8 2013**

**Location: Arnica Restaurant – Platinum building Duporth Avenue**

**Time: 12.00pm til 3.00pm**

**Cost: \$100 members and \$110 non members includes lunch and wine.**

**RSPV: April 2 2013**

**Tel: Kim Macaranas 07 3221 6662.**

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For further information and booking, please contact:

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QAPR

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