

# Louly's Restaurant

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Roqaya Abdel Hameid has a degree in political science and works with a local media company. She also manages her mother's restaurant, Louly's. Nahed Hasouna, Roqaya's mother, loves to cook and enjoys serving people her authentic Egyptian dishes. It is a passion for her and she claims it is what she is meant to do. "My daughter can choose a different path, but this is my work in life".



The breadwinner of the family, Roqaya's father, is a geophysicist. When they moved to Nova Scotia in 2004 it was to pursue Roqaya's post secondary education. After setting roots in Halifax, Nahed explored the notion of opening a business. The fact that a restaurant and food service business was foreign to the family didn't stop Nahed. She set out to test the market, accessing support in the community to experiment with her home based recipes.

She is ever grateful for support from ISIS. Roqaya notes, "ISIS helped with my mom's language which boosted her self esteem, inspiring her to move forward. They provided direction and networking from the beginning with the business and continue to help with marketing and moral support today. If we need anything, we have a great team behind us with ISIS."

After everything was in place, the opportunities arose to purchase and renovate a Quinpool Road restaurant, and in May 2010 Nahed opened her doors to Halifax. "Serving food to the public and interacting with customers was a new experience for us". However, Nahed is happy where she is and takes pleasure in preparing her food for others to experience. As the only authentic Egyptian restaurant in Halifax, her customers share in the new experience.

Roqaya offers this advice to new immigrant entrepreneurs:

***"Start small, test the market well and take it slow. There are a lot of learning curves beyond the knowledge you bring to Canada so take your time and connect with the right people before taking the big step."***

In case you're wondering why the restaurant is called Louly's, Roqaya explains "it's the nickname my dad calls my mom and it means "pearl". Since the food is made by her it made sense to name it after her."

