

DLSU-D iCON

Inspiring Conversation with Alumni

Flavors of Faith & Family

The Marasigans' Lasallian Trail in Tagaytay's Kitchens

THE MARASIGAN SIBLINGS

VIEWSITE GROUP OF RESTAURANTS, TAGAYTAY CITY

CHARMAINE
MARASIGAN-MODINA

AB Philosophy
Class of 2000

MINETTE
MARASIGAN-TUAZON

AB Philosophy
Class of 2002

PRELL
MARASIGAN-BALIDOY

BS Hotel & Restaurant Mngt
Class of 2005

JAN CARLO
MARASIGAN

BS Biology
Class of 2009

In a quiet corner of Cavite, where the mountain air carries the scent of pine and bulalo, a family of four siblings quietly reshaped the culinary map of Tagaytay—one plate, one café, and one dream at a time.

Before they were entrepreneurs, leaders, or public servants, Charmaine, Minette, Prell, and JC Marasigan were just young students walking the shaded paths of De La Salle University-Dasmariñas (DLSU-D)—four souls tethered to the same roots, but destined for vastly different journeys.

Their story began not in a boardroom or a kitchen, but inside classrooms with chalk-streaked blackboards, under the watchful eyes of mentors who dared them to dream beyond the horizon. Raised in Tagaytay City, the Marasigans were encouraged by their parents to stay close to home, and DLSU-D—with its serene campus, rich academic life, and Lasallian values—offered the perfect balance of opportunity and grounding.

No one could have predicted that this decision, rooted in protection and practicality, would become the foundation of a legacy built on purpose and passion.

THE LASALLIAN BEGINNING: FOUR PATHS, ONE CAMPUS

Charmaine: The Quiet Force Behind Service and Strategy

The eldest of the siblings, Charmaine always had a quiet confidence. Her love for books and critical thinking led her to pursue a degree in Philosophy. At DLSU-D, she found herself immersed in discussions about ethics, governance, and humanity—lessons that stayed with her long after graduation.



Eventually, she pursued and completed law school—following a path many expected her to take. But instead of choosing the courtroom, Charmaine found her true calling in public service. She began as an educator and soon transitioned into a leadership role in a local water district. Today, she serves as the Department Manager of Commercial Services, OIC of the Admin Division, and Board Secretary at the Tagaytay City Water District (TCWD)—a role that demands discipline, integrity, and heart.

Even outside of her official role, Charmaine remains the quiet strategist within the family's culinary ventures—guiding with foresight, ensuring compliance, and helping shape long-term plans with a grounded, value-driven approach. In everything she does, she carries the Lasallian principle that true leadership is not about prestige—it's about purpose, conscience, and service.



Minette: The Chef Who Found Her Soul in the Kitchen

Minette's journey didn't begin in a kitchen—it started in the corridors of DLSU-D's now-defunct Physical Therapy program. But something didn't feel right. She eventually followed in her sister's footsteps, shifting to AB Philosophy, where she found a language for her compassion and curiosity.

After college, Minette enrolled at the Center for Asian Culinary Studies, where she trained formally in the culinary arts. But her approach to food remained deeply personal—every dish, every recipe, every flavor drawn from memory and emotion.

She now oversees the kitchen and dining operations of the Viewsite Restaurant Group, known across Tagaytay for its warm service and home-style cooking. She also founded Tuazon's Kitchenette, an intimate eatery where comfort food is served with heart.

Minette is more than a chef. She is a nurturer, a quiet force who manages people and palates with equal grace. Her leadership is rooted in the Lasallian value of *cura personalis*—care for the whole person—a principle she practices daily in her team and in her kitchen.

Prell: A Global Mind with a Hometown Heart

While her older sisters pursued philosophy, Prell took a different turn. At DLSU-D, she enrolled in BS Hotel and Restaurant Management, where she learned the essentials of hospitality, guest care, and operational excellence.

After graduation, she took her talents abroad. From working with POSCO E&C in Abu Dhabi to managing boutique hotels in Romania, Prell gained the kind of international experience that few young professionals get. She led operations at Mamaia Hotel in Constanta and Casa Bucur in Bucharest, learning firsthand how to manage people across cultures and crises.

Eventually, she returned home—not to slow down, but to scale up. Today, Prell leads marketing, procurement, logistics, and overall operations for the Viewsite chain. She also returned to her alma mater as a part-time HRM instructor in 2016, mentoring students with the same energy and excellence she brings to her business.

For Prell, success is about systems, but service remains her core.



JC: Visionary Who Turns Scientific Curiosity into Creative Commerce



The youngest of the Marasigans, JC was once expected to become a doctor. He took up Biology at DLSU-D with openness but little certainty about where it would lead. He loved science, yes—but his creativity often led him outside the lab.

After college, JC joined the family business, initially in operations. But his real passion emerged in event styling—a world of color, design, and ambiance. He founded Carlo Events Styling, now one of the most sought-after event styling companies in Southern Luzon.

In 2020, JC launched his most personal venture yet: Greenhouse Café, a plant-themed dining space that merges his love for botany and wellness with food. A haven of greenery, peace, and fusion cuisine, it quickly became a go-to destination in Tagaytay.

A true multi-hyphenate, JC also served as Barangay Councilor (2013–2025), channeling his leadership into sustainability, design, and community projects. In everything he does, JC marries form with function—and science with soul.

Four Leaders, One Mission

Within the bustling heart of their multi-brand restaurant empire, the Marasigan siblings run their business not as a hierarchy, but as a finely tuned collaboration. There is no formal CEO, no executive boardroom hierarchy—only four leaders who know their roles by heart and trust one another to play them well.

Their structure is simple but powerful: divide by strength, not by seniority. Each sibling brings a unique blend of skill, experience, and perspective to the table, making their family business a living example of balance and shared leadership.

At the forefront of strategic thinking and public interface is Charmaine, the eldest. With years of experience in public service and a Philosophy degree to match, she takes charge of long-term planning, regulatory compliance, and government relations. Her voice carries weight not because of her age, but because of her clarity, discernment, and grounded vision. She ensures that the business stays aligned with local ordinances, industry standards, and, more importantly, its moral compass.

Minette, with her culinary arts training and heart for hospitality, leads the kitchen operations and guest service experience. She is the keeper of flavors and traditions, ensuring that every dish served across their restaurants is consistent, well-executed, and emotionally resonant. Under her supervision, service staff are trained not only in procedures but in the value of genuine warmth and care. Minette believes food should not only nourish the stomach, but also the spirit.

Prell, who brings global hospitality experience to the team, is the logistical and operational mind behind the scenes. She manages the supply chain, human resources, procurement, and systems design—ensuring that every restaurant,

regardless of size or location, runs with efficiency and coherence. She also handles data monitoring, performance metrics, and cost controls, blending both instinct and analytics to maintain smooth, scalable operations.

Then there's JC, the creative force. With his background in Biology, a natural flair for design, and a deep understanding of consumer behavior, he oversees branding, innovation, event styling, and customer engagement.



From café interiors to Instagram grids, from event themes to marketing campaigns—JC ensures that the Marasigan brand not only stays relevant but emotionally resonant.

Decision-making in the Marasigan family doesn't happen behind glass doors—it happens where life is happening. Often, ideas are floated during Sunday family lunches, or in a group chat that buzzes with updates, feedback, and inspiration. Some debates end with raised eyebrows, others with shared laughter, and sometimes, the best resolutions are found over a steaming bowl of bulalo.

There are no power struggles, no turf wars—because what binds them is deeper than duty. It's trust that each one will lead their domain with integrity. It's respect for one another's strengths and instincts. And it's the Lasallian values instilled in them from their days at DLSU-D—values that taught them to serve first, lead with humility, and always act with conscience.

In the Marasigan business model, leadership isn't about who's in charge—it's about who's accountable. It's not about titles, but about impact. And most of all, it's not about being the boss—but about being part of something bigger than yourself.

A TASTE OF CULTURE, A SERVING OF HERITAGE

At every Viewsite location, dining is never just about satisfying hunger—it's a sensory journey into memory, identity, and tradition. Each dish served carries with it the weight of generations, the warmth of family kitchens, and the unmistakable taste of Filipino heritage.

Take their signature bulalo, for instance. For many customers, the first sip of the rich, slow-simmered broth immediately stirs a memory—perhaps of a grandfather ladling it into bowls during a cold afternoon, or of a family huddled together around a table as the Tagaytay fog rolled in. It's more than just a beef shank soup; it's a story of comfort, resilience, and the Filipino way of turning simple ingredients into something soulful.

Then there's crispy tawilis, freshly sourced from the nearby lake. Fried to golden perfection, it's a nod to the region's natural abundance and a gentle reminder of carefree lakeside weekends, when time moved slowly and meals were shared with bare hands, laughter, and stories. It's a dish rooted not just in flavor, but in place—a culinary tribute to Taal and the life it supports.

Even the humble sinigang is elevated at Viewsite—not just in preparation, but in meaning. Its sourness isn't simply a taste—it's a feeling. A reflection of life's bittersweet moments. Served with local vegetables and tender meat, their version of sinigang evokes maternal warmth, home-cooked Sunday lunches, and the quiet assurance that no matter how sharp the bite of life gets, there's always a balance waiting in the bowl.

Minette Marasigan, who oversees the culinary operations across all locations, believes that Filipino food is not just sustenance—it is storytelling. “We don't just serve dishes,” she says. “We serve memories. We serve identity.”

That belief is embedded in every element of the dining experience—from the way food is plated, to the native décor and the music that plays in the background. Every Viewsite branch, though unique in layout, is designed to evoke a sense of belonging—whether you're a Tagaytay local who grew up on these flavors, or a visitor discovering them for the first time.

And it's not just nostalgia that drives them—it's preservation. The Marasigans see themselves as keepers of culinary culture, determined to ensure that the rich, textured flavors of Filipino cuisine are not diluted or forgotten, but rather celebrated and passed on to future generations.

At Viewsite, a dish is never just a dish. It's a chapter from a collective Filipino story—written in smoke and spices, in salt and sour, in the shared silence of a hearty meal and the conversations that follow.



Every plate serves a purpose. Every bite holds a memory. And in this way, the Marasigan legacy continues—not just through business success, but through every Filipino table touched by their food.

WEATHERING THE STORMS—LITERALLY

In early 2020, just as the Marasigan family was mapping out their next chapter of growth, nature had other plans.

It began with a low rumble beneath the earth. On January 12, the peaceful skyline of Tagaytay was interrupted by the violent eruption of Taal Volcano. In a matter of hours, the city was covered in thick ash. Tourists fled. Roads were closed. Local businesses shuttered. And what was once a thriving hospitality hub turned into a ghost town blanketed in gray.



For the Marasigans, whose restaurants were deeply woven into Tagaytay's tourism and local life, the impact was immediate and personal. Dining rooms went quiet. Deliveries stalled. Ingredients became harder to source. The familiar smell of simmering bulalo gave way to the acrid scent of volcanic dust. But even as the ash settled on rooftops and winds carried uncertainty across the ridges, the siblings moved quickly—not with panic, but with purpose.

They mobilized their teams to clean and secure each location. They checked in on staff members, many of

whom had families to protect and homes to clean. And in those first few uncertain days, they focused not on profit, but on people—their team, their neighbors, their community. But before the city could even catch its breath, another crisis swept in.

Just two months later, the COVID-19 pandemic locked down the world. Borders closed. Travel halted. And Tagaytay, a city built on tourism and weekend getaways, fell silent once more. It was a one-two punch that threatened the very heart of their business. Yet again, the Marasigans refused to surrender.

They didn't waste time lamenting what was lost. Instead, they adapted. The family pivoted swiftly to takeout and delivery, transforming dine-in menus into ready-to-eat meals. They launched food bundles for families stuck at home and made ordering as easy as a text message. They fed frontliners—nurses, police officers, barangay health workers—cooking hot meals daily and delivering them to checkpoints and clinics.

Inside their restaurants, operations changed dramatically. Schedules were adjusted to minimize risk, with staff rotated in smaller groups. Health protocols were strictly enforced, and safety became their north star. Through it all, they made one non-negotiable decision: no employee would be let go.

"We knew that if we abandoned our people, we would be losing more than just a team," Minette said later. "We'd be losing the heart of what we've built."

Instead of scaling back, they scaled with compassion. They checked on staff families, extended support where needed, and held onto hope—even when earnings plummeted and uncertainty hovered like the ash that once blanketed their roofs.

The back-to-back crises could have broken them. But instead, they became a crucible for transformation. They emerged from 2020 not just as a stronger business—but as a more mindful, more mission-driven family enterprise. They began drawing up disaster-readiness plans, trained staff in emergency protocols, and restructured systems to make their operations more adaptable. Resilience, they learned, was not just about bouncing back—but about building forward with purpose.

The Taal eruption and the pandemic reminded them that restaurants are more than places to eat. They are sanctuaries. Gathering spaces. Lifelines. And behind every dish served, there is a deeper promise—to nourish, to connect, and to keep going, no matter the storm. In facing ashfall and lockdowns, the Marasigans not only weathered the literal storms—they reaffirmed who they were and why they serve.



ROOTED IN TAGAYTAY, READY FOR TOMORROW

In a world where business success is often measured by how far and how fast one can expand, the Marasigan siblings offer a different perspective—one grounded in purpose, patience, and place.

With ten flourishing restaurant brands already dotting the cool, pine-scented hills of Tagaytay and three more quietly in development, it would be easy to assume their next step is to branch out into Manila or other major cities. After all, the inquiries come often—from mall developers, investors, even loyal patrons from the metro who want a taste of Viewsite closer to home.

But when asked about expansion beyond their hometown, the answer remains grounded.

“We grow where our roots are strongest,”
Charmaine says with calm certainty.
“And our roots are here—in Tagaytay.”

It’s not that they lack ambition. On the contrary, their vision is as bold as it is intentional. But for the Marasigans, growth is not about racing toward bigger markets or collecting city branches like trophies. It’s about deepening impact where it matters most.

Tagaytay isn’t just their business base—it’s their soul. It’s where they grew up, where they studied, where they built their first kitchen teams, and where they still know their customers by name. It’s where the fog rolls in like an old friend and where weekends still mean family meals with steaming bowls of bulalo and freshly fried tawilis. The city is etched into their identity—not just as entrepreneurs, but as storytellers, stewards of tradition, and community leaders.

While the clamor to expand grows louder, they choose instead to listen inward—to the rhythm of their family, to the needs of their staff, and to the evolving tastes of their loyal customers.

“We’re not here to chase numbers,” Prell adds. *“We’re here to chase meaning.”*



And meaning, for the Marasigans, is found in consistency, in craftsmanship, and in the kind of hospitality that can’t be franchised or rushed. Their approach to business growth mirrors their approach to food—carefully simmered, never microwaved. They believe that expanding too quickly could dilute what makes their restaurants special: the soul, the service, the story behind each meal.

Instead of branching out in all directions, they’re choosing to go deeper—refining operations, innovating menus, and investing in people. Their upcoming brands will still be proudly rooted in Tagaytay, but each will bring something new to the table—whether it’s a modern twist on traditional dining, a wellness-inspired café concept, or a hyper-local celebration of indigenous ingredients.

As they look toward the future, the Marasigans are clear-eyed and unified. Growth is coming—not in wide, sweeping gestures, but in purposeful, planted steps. They’re not expanding for visibility. They’re evolving for longevity.

And in a fast-moving world obsessed with scale, the Marasigans offer a refreshing reminder: sometimes the best way to grow is to stay rooted.



STILL AND ALWAYS, LASALLIANS

If you ask the Marasigan siblings what it means to be graduates of De La Salle University-Dasmariñas, you won't get rehearsed answers or generic school pride. You'll get something deeper—a conviction, a way of life, a shared moral compass that continues to guide every decision they make, long after their time in the classroom has ended.

"It's not just a title—it's a compass," Prell explains, her voice steady and thoughtful. "Being Lasallian means you don't just aim to lead. You're called to serve."

In their world of restaurant kitchens, public service desks, logistical planning rooms, and creative design studios, the Lasallian values planted during their college years remain deeply embedded. They do not hang their diplomas merely as reminders of past achievements—they live out the ideals those diplomas represent, every single day.

From their time at DLSU-D, the siblings internalized core values that have become pillars of their leadership style:

- Faith in Action, which inspires them to see work as vocation and service, not just profession.
- Excellence with Compassion, which reminds them that success should never come at the expense of kindness.
- Servant Leadership, which shapes how they manage teams, handle crises, and resolve conflict—with humility and care.
- And most of all, Integrity, which remains non-negotiable in both personal and professional life.

In Charmaine's case, these values echo through her work at the Tagaytay City Water District, where public trust and ethical governance are paramount. For Minette, they are present in the way she builds respectful kitchen environments and empowers her culinary staff—valuing not just skill, but human dignity.

Prell, who handles operations and human resources, embodies the Lasallian spirit in her day-to-day decisions: choosing fairness over shortcuts, mentorship over control, and collaboration over command. Meanwhile, JC weaves these values into every creative venture—whether he's curating events, designing a new café concept, or making community-based decisions as a former barangay councilor.

Their Lasallian education wasn't just preparation for careers—it was preparation for purposeful lives. The lessons didn't end at the classroom door. They were carried into family meetings, vendor negotiations, hiring interviews, and community outreach efforts.

"We don't always get it right," Minette admits. "But what DLSU-D gave us was a grounding—a set of values to return to whenever things get complicated."

In a rapidly changing industry and an unpredictable world, the Marasigans find their steady course in the Lasallian principles that shaped them. And while trends may evolve, markets shift, and businesses grow or change, one thing remains constant:

They are—and always will be—Lasallians, living out their mission with quiet confidence, compassionate leadership, and a fierce commitment to doing what is right. Because to them, being Lasallian isn't just something you graduate with. It's something you grow into—for a lifetime.



TO THE NEXT GEN LASALLIANS: LESSONS FROM THE MARASIGANS

If there's one thing the Marasigan siblings have learned through years of building businesses, mentoring teams, and leading with integrity, it's that success isn't inherited—it's earned. And it doesn't happen in boardrooms alone. It begins in the quiet, often unseen moments of hard work, humility, and heart.

Their message to future Lasallians—especially those dreaming of starting family businesses, entering hospitality, or launching creative ventures—is clear and deeply rooted in lived experience.



First, **earn your place.**

Leadership, they insist, doesn't begin with a title. It begins with a broom, a mop, or a shift in the kitchen that nobody wants. Each Marasigan sibling worked their way up by doing everything—from washing dishes to seating guests and processing payroll. They didn't fast-track their authority; they built it, hour by hour, learning each role so they could one day lead with understanding and empathy.

“Don't expect loyalty just because your name is on the signage,” Prell shares. “People follow those who've done the work—who've been in the trenches and still choose to show up.”

Second, **lead with purpose—not prestige.**

In the hospitality world, it's tempting to chase fame, trends, or appearances. But the Marasigans believe real impact comes from solving problems and bringing joy to others. Whether it's a flawlessly executed meal or a well-designed event space, their goal isn't to impress—it's to uplift.

“Ask yourself, ‘What does my work change in someone's day?’” Minette advises. **“If it brings warmth, dignity, or delight—that's the kind of success worth building.”**

Third, **stay rooted—even as you evolve.**

As entrepreneurs and creatives, the siblings are no strangers to change. Menus shift. Customer tastes evolve. Technology pushes boundaries. But they believe innovation should never come at the expense of identity.

For them, tradition is not a limitation—it's an anchor. Their Tagaytay upbringing, their Lasallian values, their family rituals around food and service—these are the foundations they return to, even as they embrace new ideas and growing audiences.

And lastly, **be kind. Always.**

In business and in life, kindness has been their quiet strength. From hiring and firing decisions to handling customer complaints or resolving internal disagreements, the Marasigans choose respect over retaliation, empathy over ego.

“Kindness doesn't mean weakness,” JC says. **“It means knowing that every interaction matters—and that dignity can be preserved, even in conflict.”**

These lessons aren't found in textbooks. They were earned in the long hours of building a business from the ground up, in the mistakes made and the recoveries that followed, in the values instilled by their family and reinforced by their time at DLSU-D.

To future Lasallians, the Marasigans offer not a formula—but a framework for life: Lead with your hands, your heart, and your values. Honor where you came from. And always—always—choose to be the kind of leader the world needs more of.



A LEGACY BUILT ON LOVE AND LASALLIAN LIGHT

The story of the Marasigan family wasn't crafted overnight. It wasn't the result of a single bold move or a lucky break. Instead, it unfolded gently—like a pot of bulalo simmering over low heat—seasoned with hard work, stirred by shared dreams, and enriched with a commitment to both family and community.

It is a legacy built on love. Love for their hometown of Tagaytay. Love for their parents, who taught them the value of humility and service. Love for the culinary traditions that connect generations. And love for the Lasallian formation that shaped their moral compass, from the halls of De La Salle University-Dasmariñas to every restaurant floor and public office they now steward.

Each sibling followed a different path—Charmaine into public service, Minette into culinary arts, Prell into global hospitality management, and JC into event styling and sustainable dining. But their journeys were never truly separate. They intertwined like roots of the same tree—anchored in values, strengthened by experience, and grown in the fertile ground of a shared upbringing and a Lasallian education.



Their success is not flashy, but it is deep. Not hurried, but lasting. It comes from saying yes to quiet leadership, to showing up even when it's hard, and to choosing people over profit. It lives in the laughter shared over team meals, in the consistency of a well-cooked sinigang, in the reassurance of jobs saved during crisis, and in every moment they lead not with ego, but with empathy.

“We didn't build this for honors,” Charmaine says. “We built it because it felt right—because it served others.”

And though their achievements already span a decade of impact and ten thriving businesses, the Marasigans know their legacy is still unfolding. Their story is far from finished. If anything, it's entering a new chapter—one that involves the next generation, evolving tastes, and an even deeper commitment to purpose.

Four siblings. Four journeys. One home. One mission.

All grounded in the enduring light of their Lasallian formation. This is not just a tale of entrepreneurial success. It is a testament to what can grow when family, faith, and formation come together—slowly, steadily, and beautifully. The Marasigan legacy isn't merely being written.

It is being lived—one plate, one decision, and one Lasallian heart at a time.

BRANDS UNDER VIEWSITE GROUP OF RESTAURANTS

- (1) Viewsite Restaurant and Events Place; (2) Viewsite Restaurant Mahogany Branch 1 ;
(3) Viewsite Restaurant Mahogany Branch 2; (4) Sinauna Manokan at Seafoods Restaurant;
(5) Bulalo King Restaurant; (6) Alamat Restaurant; (7) Casa Celina Restaurant; (8) Casa Celina Cafe;
(9) Inihaw Grande Restaurant; (10) Tuazon's Kitchenette; & (11) Carlo Events Styling

Photo credit: Prell Marasigan

