



Chef Rafi Raviv

An Exceptional Story of an Acclaimed Israeli Chef



Rafi Raviv is an acclaimed Israeli Chef, specializing in high-end local banquets and intimate gourmet dinners for visiting foreign dignitaries. He started out as a Junior Sous Chef at the King David Hotel, served as Head Chef for multiple caterers before establishing Raviv Catering. He is married to Yardena, and they have three children. He's always said that *life is good*.

Then October 7 happened. His youngest son, Omri, 20, was stationed as a Golani Intelligence Officer in Nahal Oz, the IDF base closest to Gaza. Omri's last text to his parents at 7am said, "*everything is okay*." Two hours later, Matan, their eldest, was called up to defend the Northern Front against Hezbollah attacks.

At 3pm, Rafi and Yardena dropped off Matan, and received a call from an "unknown" number. It was Omri. "*I'm alive, can't speak*." Minutes later an IDF soldier called. "Omri is being evacuated to the hospital -- he's lightly wounded." Rafi and Yardena drove five harrowing hours, picked up Omri and took him home.

Omri had survived an eight-hour battle in Nahal Oz's War Room and managed to rescue five others from the burned-out base by knocking out a bathroom window. Of the 71 soldiers stationed at Nahal Oz on that Black Saturday, 54 were killed and 10 were taken hostage. Only seven survived the battle.

After a quick nap and a meal at home, Omri hustled back to the Gaza border to join his brothers in the fight against Hamas. Since then, Omri has taken part in battles in Lebanon, Syria, and the West Bank. He never had the chance to mourn his murdered comrades or console their families.

There's so much more to the Raviv's family story. Their deeds are *exceptional*. But they *feel unexceptional*. To be Israeli these days means simply putting one foot in front of the other...breathing...hoping -- *while helping one another* -- like when Rafi and the 4 Season Catering Group fed the troops and displaced Israelis for three months on their own shekel.

Now Rafi is coming to cook for us, inform us and bring us together in the most Jewish of ways -- sitting at a table with friends, sharing great food and conversation, while mixing in good measures of faith and blessings.

