

Imagine you're 14 and you're moving to a new country. You're moving continents, actually. 6,651km to be exact. You have no form of communication with your life and friends before you move and you don't even speak the language that most people in your new country speak. Scary, right? Not only that, but you have to spend 1 month traveling by boat and a week on a train from Halifax to get to Canada. Both of my grandparents had to go through this at a young age to get to Canada. Both came from different parts of Italy and never knew each other before meeting in Canada, yet their experiences were so similar while being so different. They both came as teenagers with their families for hopes of a better life. "I learned English on TV," my grandma said. "I didn't know how else to do it."

My grandma's brothers came to Canada first. They were only about 16. They had no communication with their parents or sisters for months. While this was hard, it was the start to a better life for their family. They managed to get by while waiting for the rest of their family to arrive. My grandma was trying to recall how she felt while everything was happening. "It was strange," she said. She remembers how everything unfolded when she got there. She remembers having to drop out of school and no longer being able to continue her education. "Sesame Street helped me learn" she says about education. She said that children's shows were the best for learning English because they were "so straightforward and simple." Instead of going to school, she had to work full-time to support her family. Meanwhile, my grandpa was able to continue his schooling in Canada, while working at the same time as he had to support his family as well.

As a young girl, my grandma went from job to job, trying to find a way to continue making money. She started out working for her dad as a shoemaker, just trying to help make shoes to sell. She didn't make any money for herself, and even though it was the 1950s, imagine being a teenager with no money for yourself. While she was moving from job to job, she ended up working somewhere with a woman named Anna. This is important to remember. My grandpa was working in the kitchen at White Spot whilst in high school. He started out washing dishes because of his age but eventually worked his way up to a chef there. He found his love of cooking at White Spot. White Spot will actually cause a massive butterfly effect in his life.

One day, my grandma and Anna got to talking. During their conversation, Anna mentioned she had a nephew around her age, Fred. "There were many girls interested in him," my grandma said. Over the next few weeks, Anna and my grandma continued talking about this boy named Fred and what he's like. Anna went home and told Fred about my grandma, Maria. Fred wanted to meet Maria and Maria wanted to meet Fred. They were both about 16 when

they met. Fred worked at White Spot and Maria worked with his aunt, Anna. "He chose me," my grandma said, laughing. "There were so many girls interested, but he wanted to meet me."

Fred and Maria continued their lives together, my grandma still working and my grandpa in school and working. My grandpa discovered his love for cooking at White Spot and went on to go to culinary school after graduating high school. He went through the culinary program and started teaching at Vancouver Community College. Later, he became department head of the culinary program at VCC. There's now a scholarship in his name at the college that my grandma pays for every year to send a kid through school because it "means so much to [her]."

At 19, my grandparents got married. My grandma took my grandpa's last name, Naso. They had three children together, Frank at 21, John at 24, and Julia at 31. They grew up in Vancouver and Burnaby, all going all the way through high school and post-secondary and went on to have successful lives while raising families. Without their decisions to abandon life in Italy and move to Canada, they never would have met and started their family. My grandma says she has no regrets and "I'm so glad I did it."